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The last Check to Antinomianism.

A

POLEMICAL ESSAY

ON THE

TWIN DOCTRINES

O F

CHRISTIAN IMPERFECTION

ANDA

DEATH PURGATORY.

BY THE AUTHOR OF THE CHECKS

BE YERRECT.—Every one that is PERFECT shall be as his Master.—If thou wilt be PERFECT, go, and sell that thou has, and give to the poor.

JESUS CHRIST.

If ANY MAN teach otherwise, and consent not to wholsom words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the doctrine which is according to godliness, he is proud.

St. PAUL.

Let no man deceive you, &c. for this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might DESTROY the works of the Devil.—
The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from ALL sin.—In him is no sin.—Herein is our love made PERFECT, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he [the vine] is, so are we [the branches] IN THIS WORLD.

St. John.

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PREFACE.

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Why the following Tract is called THE LAST CHECK TO ANTINOMIANISM, and A POLEMICAL ESSAY.—Mr. Hill's Creed for Perfectionists.—A fort account of the manner in which souls are purged from the remains of sin according to the doctrine of the Heathens, the Romanists, and the Calvinists.—The PURGATORY recommended by the Church of England, and windicated in this book, is Christ's blood and a soul-purifying faith.

TCALL the following Effay The left Check to autinomianism, because it properly continues and closes the preceding Checks. When a late Fellow of Clare-hall, Cambridge, attacked the doctrine of fincere obedience, which I defend in the Checks, he faid with great truth, " Sincere obedi-" ence, as a condition, will lead you unavoidably up to PERFECT obedience." What he urged as an argument against our views of the gospel, is one of the reasons by which we defend them, and perhaps the strongest of all: For our doctrine leads as naturally to holine's and perfect obedience, as that of our opponents does to fin and imperfection. If the streams of Mr. Hill's doctrine never stop, till they have carried men into a fea of indwelling fin, where he leaves them to struggle with waves of immorality, or with billows of corruption all the days of their life; it is evident that our doctrine, which is the very reverse of his, must take us to a sea of indeading bolines, where we calmly out-ride all the storms, which Satan raised to destroy Job's perfection; and where all our pursuing corruptions are as much destroy'd as the Egyptians were in the red sea.

Truth, like Moses's rod, is all of a piece: And fo is the Serpent, which Truth devours. Look at the tail of the error which we attack; and you will fee the venemous, mortal sting of indwelling fin. Confider the but-end of the rod. with which we defend ourselves against that fmooth yet biting error; and you will find the pearl of great price, the invaluable diamond of christian perfection. In the very nature of things therefore, our long, controversial warfare must end in a close engagement for the prefervation of the Jing; or for the recovery of the much If our adverfaries can fave indwelling for the deadly fling, antinomianism has won the day: But if we can rescue christian perfection, the precious jewel; then will perfect christianity again dare to show herfelf, without being attack'd as a dangerous monfler; or fcoffed at as the base offspring of self-ignorance and pharifaic pride. This remark on the autinomianism of our opponents is founded upon the following arguments.

(1) All they, who represent christian believers as LAWLESS, first, by denying that Christ's law is a rule of judgment, which absolutely requires our own personal obedience; secondly, by representing this law as a mere rule of life; and thirdly, by infinuating that this rule of life is, after all, absolutely impracticable; that a personal sulfilment of it is not expected from any believer; that there never was a christian who lived one day without breaking it; and that believers shall be eternally saved, merely because Christ kept it for them:

them:—All they, I fay, who hold this folifidian doctrine concerning Christ's law, are christian antinomians with a witness; that is, they are lawlest christians in principle, if not in practice. Now all they, who attack the doctrine of constant obedience, and christian perfection which we maintain, are under this three-fold error concerning Christ's law; and therefore they are all antinomians, that is, christians lawless in principle, the many of them, we are persuaded, are not so in practice; the sear of God causing in them an happy inconsistency, between their legal conduct, and their lawless tenets.

- (2) If those who plead for the breaking of Christ's law by the necessary indwelling of a revengeful thought only for one week, or for one day, are bare-faced antinomians; what shall we say of the men, who, on various pretences, plead for the necessary indwelling of all manner of corruption, during the term of life? Can it be said, with any propriety, that these men are free from the plague of antinomianism?
- (3) And lastly, when the reader comes to Section XVI, wherein I produce and answer the arguments, by which the ministers of the imperfed gospel defend the continuance of indwelling fin in all believers till death, he will find that their strongest reasons for this continuance, are the very fame, which the most lawless apostates, and the most daring renegadoes daily produce, when they plead for their continuing in drunkenness, lying, fornication, and adultery: And if these immoral gospellers deserve the name of GROSS antinomians : why should not the moral men, who hold their loofe principles, and publicly recommend them as "doctrines of grace," deferve the name of RE-EINED antinomians? May not a filk-weaver, who foftly works a piece of taffeta, be as justly called a weaver, as the man who weaves the coarfest fack-

Thro' the force of these observations, after weighing my fubject in the balances of meditation and prayer for fome months, I am come to these alarming conclusions: (1) There is no medium between pleading for the continuance of indwelling fin, and pleading for the continuance of heart-antinomianism. And (2) All who attack the doctrine of an evangelically finless perfection, deferve, suben they do it [which I would hope is not often the name of advocates for fin, better than the name of Goffel-ministers and Preachers of righteousness. I am conscious, that this two-fold conclufion wounds in the tenderest part several of my dear. mistaken brethren in the ministry, whom, on various accounts, I highly honour in the Lord. Nevertheless I am, in conscience, obliged to publish it, lest any of my readers, or any of those whom they may warn, should be misled into antinomianifm thro' the mistakes of those popular preachers: For the interests of Truth, the honour of Christ's holy religion, and the welfare of precious fouls, are, and ought to be to me, and to every christian. far dearer than the credit of fome, good, injudicious men, who inadvertently undermine the cause of godliness; thinking to do God service, by stretching forth a folifidian hand, to uphold the ark of gofpel-truth. Thus much for the reasons which have engaged me to call this Essay, The last Check to antinomianism.

If the reader defires to know, why I call it also A polemical Essay, he is informed that Richard Hill Esq. [at the end of a pamphlet intitled, Three letters written to the Rev. J. Fletcher Vicar of Madely,] has published "A Creed for Arminians and Perfectionists." The ten first articles of this Creed, which respect the Arminians, I have already answered in The sellitious and genuine Creed; and the sollowing sheets contain my reply to the last article, which entirely refers to the Persellionists.

That gentleman introduces the whole of his fictitious Creed by these lines: "The following con"fession of faith, however shocking, not to say blassemous, it may appear to the humble christian, must
inevitably be adopted, if not in express words, yet in
substance by every Arminian and Perfectionist whatfocver; tho the last article of it chiefly concerns
fuch as are ordained ministers in the Church of
England."—This last article, which is the Creed I
answer here, runs thus:

"Tho' I have folemnly fubscribed to the 30 " Articles of the Church of England, and have " affirmed that I believe them from my heart, yet " I think our Reformers were profoundly ig-" norant of true christianity, when they declared in the oth article, that " the infection of nature " does remain in them which are regenerate;" And in the 15th, that, "ALL WE, the rest (Christ only excepted) altho baptized and born again in Christ, set yet offend in many things, and if we fay we bave " no fin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in " This I totally deny, because it cuts up root " and branch my favourite doctrine of Perfection; " and therefore let Peter, Paul, James, and John, 16 fay what they will, and let the reformers and " martyrs join their fyren-fong, their eyes were at best but half open'd (for want of a little Four-" dery eye-falve;) therefore I cannot look upon " them as adult believers in Jesus Christ."

" J. F."
" J. W."
" W. S."

These initial letters probably stand for John Fletcher, John Wesley, and Walter Seison. As Mr. Hill seems to level his witty creed at me first, I shall first make my observations upon it. The wan without the main body, and the rear, may perhaps make a proper stand against that gentleman's mis-

bly connected with the doctrine of a purgatory little better than that of the papills; it being evident, that, if we cannot be purged from the remains of fin in this life, we must be purged from them in death, or after death; or we must be banish'd from God's presence: for reason and scripture jointly depose, that nothing unboly or unclean shall enter into the beavenly ferusalem.

If we understand by Purgatory the manner in which souls still-polluted with the remains of sin, are, or may be purged from these remains, that they may see an holy God, and dwell with him for ever; the question, Which is the true Purgatory? is by no means frivolous; for it is the grand Enquiry, How shall I be eternally saved? proposed in different expressions.

There are four opinions concerning Purgatory, or the purgation of fouls from the remains of fin. The wildest is that of the heathens, who supposed, "That the souls which depart this life with some moral filth cleaving to them, are purified by being hanged out to sharp, cutting winds; by being plunged in a deep, impetuous whirl-pool; or by being thrown into a refining fire in some tartarean region; "witness these lines of Virgila.

Aliæ panduntur inanes Suspensæ ad ventos: aliis sub gurgite vasto Insectum eluitur scelus, aut exuritur igni.

The fecond opinion is that of the Romanifls, who teach, that fuch fouls are completely fanctified by the virtue of Christ's blood; and the sharp operation of a penal, temporary fire in the suburbs of hell. The third opinion is that of the Calvinishs, who think, that the stroke of death must absolutely be joined with Christ's blood and spirit, and with our faith, to cleanse the thoughts of our hearts, and to kill the inbred man of sin.

The last sentiment is that of the church of England, which teaches that there is no other purgatory but " Christ's blood"-" stedfast, pertect "faith" and "the infpiration of God's holy " Spirit, cleanfing the thoughts of our hearts, that we may perfectly love him, and worthily " magnify his holy name."-" The only Pur-"GATORY wherein we must trust to be saved flays " fhe] is the death and blood of Christ, which, if " we apprehend with a TRUE AND STEDFAST " FAITH" [called foon after " a PERFECT faith"] it purgeth and cleanfeth us from ALL our fins. " The blood of Christ, fays St. John, bath cleanfed us from all fin, The blood of Christ fays St. Paul, " bath turged our consciences from dead works to ferve the living God, &c. This then is the PURGA-" TORY wherein all christian men put their trust " and confidence." Homily on Prayer, Part iii.

Nor is this doctrine of purgatory peculiar to the church of England: for the unprejudiced puritans themselves maintained it in the last century. Mr. R. Alleine in his excellent treatise on Gody Flar, printed in London, 1674, says, page 161, "The "Lord Christ is sometimes resembled to a Resining Fire, &c. He is a refiner's fire,—and be shall fit as a "refiner, and purifier of filver. He shall purify, be fall save his people from their fins, yet so as by fire. God has his purgatory as well as his hell; tho' not according to that popish dream, a pursuadd;—tho' not according to that Calvinian dream, a purgatory when we leave this life—a purgatory in the article of death.

The scriptural doctrine of Purgatory is vindicated, and the new-fangled doctrine of a Death-Purgatory is exploded, in the following pages: where I endeavour both to defend the glorious liberty of the children of God, and to attack the false liberty of those, who, while they promise liberty to athere

others in Christ, are themselves [doctrinally at least] the servants of corruption; pleading hard for the indwelling of sin in our hearts so long as we live; and thinking it almost "blasshemous" to affert, that Christ's blood fully apply'd by the spirit, thro a stedfast faith, can radically cleanse us from all sin, without the least affistance from the arrows or sweats of death.

Reader, I plead for the most precious liberty in the world, beart-liberty; -for liberty from the most galling of all yokes, the yoke of beart corruption : Let not thy prejudices turn a deaf ear to the important plea. If thou candidly, believingly, and practically receivest the truth as it is in Jesus, it shall make thee free, and thou Shalt be FREE INDEED. Then, instead of shouting " Indwelling sin and " Death-purgatory," thou wilt fulfil the law of liberty; shouting "Christ and christian liberty for " ever." In the mean time, when thou makest intercession for thy wellwishers, remember the author of this Effey, and pray that he may plead on his knees against the remains of fin, far more earneftly than he does in these sheets against Mr. Hill's millakes, an independent temperature of there's district in Reg. Sec. He fra refrend to the mandale hall for us a

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The last Check to Antinomianism.

SECTION I.

The best way of opposing the doctrines of christian imperfection and of a death-purgatory, is to place the doctrine of christian perfection in a proper light.—Christian perfection is the maturity of a believer's grace under the gospel of Christ.—It is absurd to suppose that this perfection is finless, if it is measured by our CREATOR's law of paradisaical innocence and obedience,—Established believers sufficient Redeemer's evangelical law of liberty. Whilst they fulfil it, they do not transgress it, that is, (EVANGELICALLY speaking) they DO NOT SIN.

OST of the controversies which arise between men who sear God, spring from the hurry with which some of them find fault with what they have not examined, and speak evil of what they do not understand. Why does Mr. Hill at the head of the Calvinists attack the doctrine of christian perfection which we contend for? Is it because he and they are sworn enemies to righteourness, and zealous protectors of iniquity? Not at all. The grand reason, next to their Calvinian prejudices, is their inattention to the question, and

to the arguments by which our fentiments are fupported. Notwithstanding the manner in which that gentleman has treated me and my friends in his controverfial heats, I still entertain so good an opinion of him as to think, that, if he understood our doctrine, he would no more pour contempt upon it, than upon the oracles of God. I shall therefore endeavour to rectify his ideas of the glorious, christian liberty which we press after. If producing light is the best method of opposing darkness, setting the doctrine of christian perfection in a proper point of view will be the best means of oppoling the doctrines of christian imperfection, and of a death-purgatory. Begin we then by taking a view of our Yerusalem and her perfection; and when we shall have marked ber bulwarks, and cleared the ground between her towers and Mr. Hill's battery. we shall march up to it, and see whether his arguments have the folidity of brafs, or only the showy appearance of wooden artillery painted and mounted like brazen ordnance.

Christian perfection! Why should the harmless phrase offend us?—Perfection! Why should that lovely word frighten us? Is it not common and plain? Did not Cicero speak intelligibly, when he called accomplished philosophers, "perfector philosophos;" and an excellent orator, "perfector oratorem?" Did Ovid expose his reputation when he said that "Chiron! perfected Achilles in musick," or, "taught him to play upon the lute to perfection?" And does Mr. Hill think it wrong to observe that a fruit grown to maturity is in its perfection? We, whom that Gentleman calls perfectionists, use the word † persection exactly in the same sense; giving

Long myst

[†] Phillyrides puerum cithara perfecit Achillem.

[†] The word Perfettion comes from the Latin perficio, to perfett, to finish, to accomplish; It exactly answers to the words to the words to the words and reaction, generally used in the old and new testament. Nor can their derivatives be more literally, and exactly rendered

giving that name to the maturity of grace peculiar to established believers under their respective dispensations: And if this is an error, we are led into it by the facred writers, who use the word persellies as well as we.

The word predestinate occurs but four times in all the feriptures, and the word predefination not once; and yet Mr. Hill would justly exclaim against us, if we shewed our wit by calling for "a little Found [or Tabernacle] "eye-salve," to help us to see " to help us to fee the word predestination ONCE in all the bible. Not fo the word perfection: It occurs, with its derivatives as frequently as most words in the scripture; and not feldom in the very fame fense in which we take it. Nevertheless we do not lay an undue stress upon the expression; and if we thought that our condescension would answer any good end, we would entirely give up that harmless and fignificant word. But, if it is expedient to retain the UNSCRIPTURAL word Trinity, because it is a kind of watch-word. by which we frequently discover the secret opposers of the mysterious distinction of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost in the divine unity; how much more proper is it not to renounce the SCRIPTURAL WOR Perfection, by which the dispirited spies, who bring an evil report upon the good land of holiness, are often detected?-Add to this, that the following declaration

rendered than by perfect and perfection. If our translators render sometimes the word by upright and sincere, or by sincerity and integrity, it is because they know that these expressions, like the original word, admit of a great latitude. Thus Column calls wood that has no rotten part, and is perfectly found, figures sincerum: And Horace says, that a sweet Cash, which has no bad smell of any fort, is vias sincerum. Thus also George calls purity of diction, which is perfectly free from saults against grammar, integritals formonis: Plantus says, that a pure, undefiled virgin, is filia integra. And our translators call the perfectly-pure milk of God's Word, The sincerum milk of the word: 1 Peter, ii, 2. If therefore the words sincerity and Integrity are taken in their full latitude, they convey the fullest meaning of TOD, and Texastolus, i. e. perfection.

declaration of our Lord does not permit us to remounce either the word or the thing, Whosever shall
be assumed of me, and of MY WORDS in this finful generation, of him also shall the Son of man be assumed, when
be cometh in the glory of his Father. Now the words
of my motto, Be ye PERFECT, &c. being Christ's
own words, we dare no more be assumed of them,
than we dare defire that he may be assumed of us in
the great day. Thus much for the word perfection.

Again: We call CHRISTIAN perfection the maturity of grace and holiness, which established, adult believers attain to under the CHRISTIAN dispensation; and, by this means, we distinguish that maturity of grace, both from the ripeness of grace, which belongs to the dispensation of the Jews BELOW us; and from the ripeness of glory, which belongs to departed faints ABOVE us. Hence it appears, that by christian perfection we mean nothing but the cluster and maturity of the graces, which compose the

christian character in the church militant.

In other words, CHRISTIAN PERFECTION is a spiritual constellation made up of these gracious Stars, PERFECT repentance, PERFECT faith, PERFECT bumility, PERFECT meekness, PERFECT self-denial, PERFECT refenation, PERFECT bope, PERFECT charity for our VISIBLE enemies, as well as for our EARTHLY relations .- And above all, PERFECT love for our INVISIBLE God, thro' the explicit knowledge of our Mediator Jesus Christ. And as this last star is always accompanied by all the others, as Jupiter is by his fatellites, we frequently use, as St-John, the phrase PERFECT LOVE, instead of the word perfection; understanding by it the pure love of God, shed abroad in the heart of established believers by the Holy Ghost, which is abundantly given them under the fulness of the christian dispenfation.

Should Mr. Hill ask if the christian perfection, which we contend for, is a SINLESS perfection, we reply: SIN is the transgression of a divine law, and man may be considered either as being under

the anti-evangelical, Christless, remediless law of our CREATOR; or, as being under the evangelical, mediatorial, remedying law of our REDEEMER: And the question must be answered according to the na-

ture of these two laws.

With respect to the First, that is, the Adamic, Christless law of innocence and paradisaical perfection, we utterly renounce the doctrine of SINLESS perfection, for three reasons: (1) We are conceived and born in a ftate of finful degeneracy, whereby that law is already virtually broken. (2) Our mental and bodily powers are fo enfeebled, that we cannot help actually breaking that law in numberless instances, even after our full conversion. And (3) when once we have broken that law, it confiders us as transgressors for ever: nor can it any more pronounce us finless, than the rigorous law which condemns a man to be hang'd for murder, can absolve a murderer, let his repentance and faith be ever fo perfect. Therefore, I repeat it, with respect to the Christless law of paradisaical obedience, we entirely disclaim sinless perfection; and improperly fpeaking, we fay with Luther, " In every good work the just man SINNETH: That is, he more or less transgresses the law of paradifaical innocence, by not thinking fo deeply, not speaking fo gracefully, not acting to properly, not obeying fo vigorously, as he would do, if he were still endued with original perfection, and paradifaical pow-Nor do we, IN THE SAME SENSE, fcruple to fay with Bishop Latimer: " He [Cbrist] faved " us, not that we should be without fin; that no " fin should be left in our hearts: No: he faved " us not fo. For ALL MANNER OF IMPERFEC-" TIONS remain in us, yea in the best of us: So " that, if God should enter into judgment with us" [according to the Christless law given to Adam before the fall] " we should be damn'd. For there nei-" ther is nor was any man born into this world, " who could fay, I am clean from fin" [Ifulfil the Adamic law of innocence] " except Jefus Christ:

And IN THAT SENSE, we have all reason to pray with David, Cleanse thou me from my secret faults; for if thou wilt mark what is done amiss, Lord, who may abide it?—If thou wilt judge us according to the law of paradisaical perfection, what man living shall be justified in thy sight? But Christ has so completely sulfilled our Creator's paradisaical law of innocence, which allows neither of repentance nor of renewed obedience, that we shall not be judged by that law; but by a law adapted to our present state and circumstances, a milder law, called the law of Christ, i. e. the Mediator's law, which is, like

himself, full of evangelical grace and truth.

To the many arguments, which I have advanced in the Checks in defence of this law, I shall add one more, taken from Heb. vii. 12; The PRIEST-HOOD being CHANGED, there is made OF NECESSITY a CHANGE also of the LAW. From these words I conclude, that, if the law under which the jews were, was of necessity changed, when God substituted the priesthood of Christ for that of Auton; much more was the Adamic law of paradifaical innocence of necessity changed, when God gave to Adam by promise the Bruiser of the serpent's bead, the High-priest after the order of Melthisedec. For if a CHANGE in the external priefibood of NECESSITY implied a change of the Mosaic law; how much more did the INSTITUTION of the priefibood itself, necessarily imply a change of the Adamic law, which was given without any mediating priest!

If Mr. Hill therefore, will do our doctrine justice, we intreat him to consider, that we are not without law to God; nor yet under a christless law with Adam; but under a law to Christ, that is under the law of our royal priest, the evangelical law of liberty:—a more gracious law this, which allows of sincere repentance, and is suffilled by loving saith. Now as we shall be judged by this law of liberty, we maintain not only that it may, but also that it must be kept; and that it is actually kept by established christians, according to the last and sullest edition of it, which

is that of the new testament. Nor do we think it "shocking" to hear an adult believer say: The law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus bas made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law [of innocence, or the letter of the Mosaic law] could not do, in that it was weak thro' the sless, God sending his own Son condemned sin in the sless, that the righteousness of the law might be [evangelically] FULFILLED IN US WHO WALK NOT AFTER THE. FLESH BUT AFTER THE SPIRIT. Rom. viii. 2, &c...

Reason and scripture seem to us to confirm this doctrine: For we think it is far less abfurd to fay. that the king and parliament make laws, which no-English-man can possibly keep; than to suppose, that Christ and his Apostles have given us precepts, which no christian is able to observe: And St. James affures us, the evangelical law of Christ and liberty is that by which we shall stand or fall in. judgment: So fpeak ye; and fo do, fays he, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty, Jam. ii. 12. We find the christian edition of that law in all the new testament, but especially in our Lord's fermon. on the mount, and in St. Paul's description of charity.—We are perfuaded with St. John and St. Paul, that, as fin is the transgression, so penitential, pure love is the fulfilling of that evangelical lows And therefore, we do not scruple to say with the apostle, that be subo loweth another bath fulfilled it; -and that there is no occasion of stumbling, i. e. no fin, in him; fulfilling the law of Christ and finning in the evangelical fense of the word being as diametrically opposite to each other, as obeying and disobeying—working righteousness and working iniquity.

We do not doubt but, as a reasonable, loving father never requires of a child, who is only ten years old; the work of one who is thirty years of age: fo our heavenly Father never expects of us, in our debilitated state, the obedience of immortal Adam in paradife, or the uninterrupted worship of

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Sleepless angels in heaven. We are persuaded therefore, that, for Christ's fake, he is pleased with anhumble obedience to our prefent light, and a loving exertion of our present powers; accepting our golpel-fervices according to what we have, and not according to subat sue have not. Nor dare we call that loving exertion of our present powers, fin, lest by fo doing we should contradict the scriptures; confound for and obedience, and remove all the landmarks which divide the devil's common from the Lord's vineyard. And if at any time we have exaggerated the difficulty of keeping Christ's law, we acknowledge our error, and confess that, by this means, we have calvinistically traduced the equity of our gracious God; and inadvertently encouraged; antinomian delutions.

To conclude: We believe, that, altho adult, established believers, or perfect christians, may admit of many involuntary miltakes, errors, and faults; and of many involuntary improprieties of speech and behaviour; yet, so long as their will is bent upon doing God's will;—so long as they walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit; - so long as they fulfil the law of liberty by pure love, they do not fin according to the gospel: because (EVAN-GELICALLY SPEAKING) SIN is the transgression, and LOVE is the fulfilling of that law. Far then from thinking, that there is the least absurdity in faying daily, Vouchfafe to keep us this day. WITHOUT SIN, we doubt not but in the believers, who walk in the light as Christ is in the light, that deep petition is answered; the righteousness of the law, which they are under, is fulfilled; and or confequence, an EVANGELICALLY finless perfection is daily experienced.—I fay EVANGELICALLY finbecause, without the word EVANGELICALLY, the phrase sinless perfection gives an occasion of cavilling to those who seek it, as Mr. Wesley intimates in the following quotation, which is taken from his Plain account of christian perfection, page 60. " To explain myself a little farther on this head ! a. (1)3

4 (1) Not only SIN, properly so called, that is; as weluntary transgression of a known law, but fing MPROPERLY fo called, that is, an involuntary " transgression of a divine law, known or unknown; " needs the atoning blood.—(2) I believe there is " no fuch perfection in this life, as excludes thefe " involuntary transgressions, which I apprehend to be naturally confequent on the ignorance and " mistakes inseparable from mortality .- (3) There-" fore SINLESS perfection is a phrase I never use; " lest I should seem to contradict myself.—(4) } believe a person filled with the love of God is " still liable to these involuntary transgressions. " (5) Such transgressions you may call fins, if you " please; I do not, for the reasons above-men-" tioned."

SECTION IL

Bious Calvinists have had AT TIMES, nearly the same views of christian perfection which we have. They dissent from us chiefly because they confound the anti-evangelical law of innocence, and the evangelical law of liberty, peccability and sin, Adamic and Abristian perfection; and because they do not consider, that christian perfection falling infinitely short of God's ABSOLUTE perfection, admits of a daily GROWTH; that angels have their "short-comings" in heaven; and that Christ had his innocent infirmities upon earth.

If it were necessary, we could support the doctrine of christian persection stated in the preceding pages by almost numberless quotations from the most judicious and pious calvinists. The sentiments of two or three of them may edify the reader, and give him a specimen of the candor, with which they have written upon the subject, when a spring-tide of evangelical truth raised them above the shallows of their system.

If LOVE be SINCERE, [fays pious Mr. Henry]: " it is accepted as the FULFILLING OF THE LAW. Surely we serve a good Master, that has sume med up all our duty in one word, and that a. " short word, and a sweet word, Love, the beauty. and harmony of the universe. Loving and being loved is all the pleasure, joy, and happiness. of an intelligent being. God is love, and love is his image upon the foul. Where it is, the foul is well moulded, and the heart fitted for every good work. Henry's Exposition on Rom. xiii. 10 .- Again: 'It is well for us that by virtue: of the covenant of grace, upon the score of "Christ's righteousness, fincerity is accepted as OUR GOSPEL-PERFECTION.' Hen. on Gen. vi. g .. -[See the note on the word perfection, Sect. I.]

Pious Bishop Hopkins is exactly of the fame mind. · Consider,' says be, ' for your encouragement, that it is not fo much the absolute and LEGAL. perfection of the work, as the' [cvangelical] perfection of the worker, that is, the perfection of the heart, which is looked at and rewarded by God. There is a, two-fold perfection, the perfection of the work, and that of the workman. The perfection of the work is, when the work does so exactly and strictly answer the holy. ' law of God, that there is no IRREGULARITY' in it. The perfection of the workman is nothing but inward fincerity and uprightness of the heart towards God, which may be where thereare many imperfections and defects intermingled. If God accepted and rewarded no work, but: what is absolutely perfect IN RESPECT OF THE: LAW; this would take off the wheels of all endeavours, for our obedience falls far short of. LEGAL PERFECTION in this life;' (the Adamic law making no allowances for the weaknesses of fallen man.) But we do not stand upon such terms as these are with our God. It is not fo much what our works are, as what our heart is, that God looks at and will reward. Yet know also that if our hearts are: PERFECT.

FERFECT and SINCERE, we shall endeavour to

perfect according to the strictness of the law.

Archbishop Leighton pleads also for the perfection we maintain, and by calvinistically supposing that perseverance is necessary to christian perfection, he extols it above Adam's paradifaical perfections. Take his own words abridged: 'By obedience fanc tification is here intimated: It fignifies both ha-4 bitual and actual obedience, renovation of heart, and conformity to the divine will: The mind is illuminated by the Holy Ghost to know and bebieve the divine will; yea this faith is the great and chief part of this obedience, Rom. i. 8. The truth of the doctrine is first impressed on the mind, hence flows out pleafant obedience and ' FULL' [be does not fay OF SIN, but] ' OF LOVE: Hence all the affections, and the whole body with its members, learn to give a willing obedience and fubmit to God; whereas BEFORE they refifted him, being under the standard of Satan. This obedience, tho' imperfect' [when it is measured by the christless law of paradisaical innocence | ' yet has a certain, if I may fo fay, imper-' fect perfection.' [It is not LEGALLY but EVANGE-LICALLY perfect.] ' It is universal' [or perfect]. three manner of ways, (1) In the subject :-Lt is not in the tongue alone, or in the hand, &c. but has its root in the heart-(2) In the oa-JECT:-It embraces the whole law, &c. It aecounts no command little, which is from God, because he is great and highly esteemed: no com-6 mand hard, tho' contrary to the flesh, because ' all things are easy to Love; there is the same ' authority in all, as St. James divinely argues. And this authority is the golden chain of all the commandments' fof the law of liberty preached by St. James] 'which if broke in any link falls to pieces. - (3) In the DURATION, the whole man is subjected to the whole law, and that confantly.—That this threefold PERFECTION of · obedienceobedience is not a picture drawn by fancy, is evident in David, Pf. 119." Archbishop Leigh-

ton's com. on St. Peter. Page 15.

That learned prelate, as a pious man could not but be a perfectionist; tho', as a Calvinist, he frequently spoke the language of the imperfectionists. Take one more quotation, where he grants all that we contend for. 'To be fubject to him' (God) ' is truer happiness than to command the whole world. Pure Love reckons thus, · Tho' no farther reward were to follow; obedience to God (the PERFECTION of his creature; and its very happiness) carries its full recompence in it's own bosom. Yea love delights most in the hardest services: &c. It is love to him indeed to love the labour of love, and the fervice of it; and that not fo much because it leads to reft, and ends in it, but because it is service to him whom we love: Yea, that labour is in itfelf a rest: It is so natural and sweet to a soul that loves, as the revolution of the heavens, which is a motion in rest, and rest in motion; changes. 4 not place, tho' running still: So the motion of · love is truly heavenly, and circular still in God; beginning in him, and ending in him; and fo onot ending, but moving still without weariness, &c. According as the love is, fo is the foul: it is made like to, yea, it is made one with that, which it loves, &c. By the love of God. it is made divine, is one with him, &c. Now " tho' fallen from this, we are again invited to it; tho' degenerated and accurfed in our finful-· nature, yet we are renewed in Christ, and this commandment is renewed in him, and a NEW. way of fulfilling it' [even the way of faith in. our redeemer] ' is pointed out.' Select works of Arch. Leighton. page 461. Where has Mr. Wesley ever exceeded this high description of christian. perfection?

I grant that this pious prelate frequently confounds our celestial perfection of GLORY with our

progressive.

progressive perfection of GRACE, and on that account supposes that the latter is not attainable in this life: But even then he exhorts us to quit ourfelves like fincere perfectionists. 4 Though men, favs he, 'fall short of their aim, yet it is good to aim high: they shall shoot so much the higher. 4 tho' not full fo high as they aim. Thus we dought to be fetting the state of PERFECTION in our eye, refolving not + to rest content below that, and to come as near it as we can, even beof fore we come at it. Phil. iii. 11, 12. This is to act as one that has fuch a hope, fuch a state in view, and is still advancing towards it.' Ibid. page 184. The mistake of the archbishop will be particularly pointed out, where I shall show the true meaning of Phil. iii. 11—the paffage, behind which he skreens the remains of his calvinian prejudices.

By the preceding quotations, and by two more from the rev. Mess. Whitfield and Romaine, which the reader will find at the end of Sect. IX, it appears, that pious Calvinists come at times very near the doctrine of christian perfection; And it they do not constantly ensorce it, it is [we apprehend]

chiefly for the following reasons.

(1) They generally confound the christless law of innocence with the evangelical law of Christ; and, because

⁺ I think I have faid in one of the Checks, that Arch. Leighton doubted whether those, who do not sincerely aspire after perfection, have saving grace: That doubt (if I now remember right) is Mr. Alleyne's; Tho' this quotation from the Archbishop shows, that he was not far from Alleyne's sentiment, if he was not in it. Pious Dr. Doddridge is explicit on this head. "To allow yourself," says he, "deliberately to fit down fatisfied with any IMPERFECT attainments in religion, and to look upon a more confirmed and improved state of it as what you do not desire, nay, as what you secretly resolve that you will not pursue, is one of the most fatal sions we can well imagine, that you are AN ENTIRE STRANGER to the first pricriples of it." Doddridge's Rise and Prog. Chap.

because the former cannot be sulfilled by believers, they conclude that pure obedience to the latter is

impracticable.

(2) They confound peccability with fin; -the power of finning with the actual use of that power. And fo long as they suppose, that a bare natural capacity to fin is either original fin, or an evil propenfity, we do not wonder at their believing, that original fin, or evil propenfities must remain in our hearts till death removes us from this tempting But on what argument do they found this notion? Did not God create angels and man peccabile? Or, in other terms, Did he not endue them with a power to fin or not to fin, to disobey or to obey, as they pleased? Did not the event show that they had this tremendous power? But would it not be "blasphemous" to affert, that God created them full of original fin, and of evil propenfities?—If an adult believer yields to temptation, and falls into fin as our first parents did; is it a proof that he never was cleanfed from inbred fin? If finning necessarily demonstrates that the heart was always teeming with depravity, will it not follow, that Adam and Eve were tainted with fin before their will began to decline from original righteoufness? Is it not however indubitable, from the nature of God, from scripture, and from sad experience, that after having been created in God's finless image, and holy likeness, our first parents, as well as some angels, were drawn away of their own selfconceived luft, and became evil by the power of their own free-agency? Is it reasonable to think, that the most holy christians, so long as the day of their visitation and probation lasts in this tempting wilderness, are in that respect above Adam in paradife, and above angels in heaven? And may we not conclude, that as Satan and Adam infenfibly fell into fin, the one from the height of his celestial perfection, and the other from the summit of his paradifaical excellence, without any previous bias inclining him to corruption: So may those believers,

believers, whose hearts have been completely purified by faith, gradually depart from the faith, and fall so low as to account the blood of the covenant, wherewith they were fanclified, an unboly thing?

(3) The prejudices of our opponents, are increafed by their confounding Adamic and Chriftian perfection; two perfectionists these, which are as distinct as the garden of Eden and the christian church. Adamic perfection came from God our Creator in paradife, BEFORE any trial of Adam's faithful obedience: and Christian perfection comes from God our Redeemer and Sanctifier in the christian church, AFTER a fevere trial of the obedience of faith. Adamic perfection might be loft by doing despite to the preserving love of God our Creator; and Christian perfection may be lost by doing defpite to the redeeming love of God our Saviours ADAMIC PERFECTION extended to the whole man: His body was perfectly found in all its parts; and his foul in all its powers. But CHRIS-TIAN PERFECTION extends chiefly to the will, which is the capital, moral power of the foul; leaving

[†] Between Adamic and christian perfection we place the GRAcrous innocence of little children. They are not only full of
peccability like Adam, but debilitated in all their animal and
rational faculties, and of consequence sit to become an easy prey
to every temptation, thro' the weakness of their reason, and the
corruption of their concupisable and irascible powers. Nevertheless, till they begin personally to prefer moral evil to monal
good, we may consider them as EVANGELICALLY OF GRACIOUSLY innocent. I say, GRACIOUSLY innocent, because, if we
consider them in the seed of fallen Adam, we find them
NATURALLY children of wrath, and under the curse: But if we
consider them in the seed of the woman, which was promised to
Adam and to his posterity, we find them graciously placed in a
state of redemption, and evangelical salvation. For the free
gist, which is come upon all men to justification, belongs sort to
them; Christ having sanctissed insancy sorts. And therefore
we do not scruple to say after our Lord; Of such is the singular
of heaven. Now the kingdom of heaven is not of suners as
simplers; but of little children, as being innocent thro' the freegist; or of adult, as being penitent, that is, turned from their
sins to Christ.

Leaving the understanding ignorant of ten thousand

things, and the body dead because of fin.

(4) Another capital mistake lies at the root of the opposition which our Calvinian brethren make against christian perfection. They imagine that, upon our principles, the grace of an adult chriftian, is like the body of an adult man, which can grow no more. But this consequence flows from their fancy, and not from our doctrine. We exhort the strongest believers to grow up to Christ in all things; afferting that there is no holiness, and no happiness in heaven [much less upon earth.] which do not admit of a growth, except the holiness and the happiness of God himself: Because, in the very nature of things, a Being absolutely perfect, and in every fense infinite, can never have any thing added to him. But infinite additions can be made to beings every way finite, fuch as glorified

faints and holy angels are.

Hence it appears, that the comparison which we make between the ripeness of a fruit, and the maturity of a believer's grace, cannot be carried into an exact parallel. For a perfect christian grows far more than a feeble believer, whose growth is still obstructed by the shady thorns of fin, and by the draining fuckers of iniquity. Besides a fruit which is come to its perfection instead of growing falls and decays; whereas a babe in Christ is called to grow, till he becomes a perfect christian; -a perfect christian, till he becomes a disembodied spirit; -a disembodied spirit, till he reaches the perfection of a faint glorified in body and foul;and fuch a faint, till he has fathom'd the infinite depths of divine perfection, that is, to all eternity. For if we go on from faith to faith, and are spiritually changed from glory to glory by beholding God darkly thro' a glass on earth; much more shall we experience improving changes, when we shall fee Him as be is, and behold him face to face in various, numberless, and still brighter discoveries of himfelf in heaven. If Mr. Hill did but confider this,

he would no more suppose that ebristian perfection is the pharisaic rickets, which put a stop to the growth of believers, and turn them into "temporary mon-

fters." Again :

Does a well-meant mistake defile the conscience? You inadvertently encourage idleness and drunkenness by kindly relieving an idle, drunken beggar who imposes upon your charity by plaufible lies: Is this loving error a fin ?-A blundering apothecary fends you arfenic for alum; you use it as alum, and poison your child; but are you a murderer, if you gave the fatal dofe in love? Suppose the Tempter had fecretly mixed some of the forbidden fruit, with other fruits that Eve had lawfully gathered for use; would she have staned if the had inadvertently eaten of it, and given a thare to her husband? After humbly confessing and deploring her undefigned error, her farer fault, her accidental offence, her involuntary trespass; would fhe not have been as innocent as ever?-I go farther still, and ask: May not a man, who holds many right opinions be a perfect lover of the world? And, by a parity of reason, may not a man, who holds many wrong opinions, be a perfect lover of God? Have not some Calvinists died with their hearts overflowing with perfect love, and their heads full of the notion, that God fer his everlafting absolute hatred upon myriads of men before the foundation of the world?-Nay, is it not even possible, that a man, whose heart is renewed in love, should, thro' mistaken bumility, or thro' westness of understanding, oppose the NAME of christian perfection, when he defires, and perhaps enjoys the THING?

Once more: Does not St. Paul's rule hold in spirituals, as well as in temporals: It is accepted according to what a man bath, and not according to what be hath not? Does our Lord actually require more of believers than they can actually do thro' his grace? And when they do it to the best of their power, does he not see some persection in their works, infiguisheans.

Agnificant as those works may be?—Remove this immense heap of stones, fays an indulgent father to his children; and be diligent according to your strength. While the eldest, a strong man, removes rocks; the youngest, a little child, is as chearfully bufy as any of the rest in carrying sands and pebbles. Now, may not his child-like obedience be as excellent in its degree, and, of confequence, as acceptable to his parent as the manly obedience of his eldest brother? Nay, tho' he does next to nothing, may not his endeavours, if they are more cordial, excite a smile of superior approbation in his loving Father, who looks at the difposition of the heart, more than at the appearance of the work? Had the believers of Sardis cordially laid out all their talents, would our Lord have complained that he did not find their works PER-FECT before God? Rev. iii. 2. And was it not according to this rule of perfection, that Christ testified, The poor widow, who had given but two mites, had nevertheless cast more into the treasury than all the rich, the' they had cast in much; because, our Lord himself being judge, the had given all that the bad? Now could the give, or did God require more than her all? And when the thus heartily gave her all, did the not do fevangeli-CALLY Speaking a PERFECT work, according to her dispensation and circumstances?

We flatter ourselves that if these scriptural observations, and rational queries, do not remove Mr. Hill's prejudice, they will at least make way for a

more candid perufal of the following pages.

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SECTION III

Several objections raised against our doctrine are solved merely by considering the nature of christian perfection.

—It is absurd to say, that all our christian perfection is in the person of Christ.

I Repeat it, if our pions opponents decry the doctrine of christian perfection, it is chiefly thromisapprehension; it being as natural for pions mento recommend exalted piety, as for coverous perfons to extol great riches. And this misapprehension frequently springs from their inattention to the nature of christian perfection. To prove it I need only oppose our definition of christian perfection to the objections, which are most commonly raised against our doctrine.

I. "Your doctrine of perfection leads to pride,"Impossible! if christian perfection is "perfect bu-

se mility."

4. 九九

II. "It exalts believers; but it is only to the fate of the vainglorious pharifee."—Impossible! If our perfection is "perfect bumility," it makes us fink deeper into the state of the humble, justified.

publican.

III. "It fills men with the conceit of their own excellence, and makes them fay to a weak brother, fland by, I am bolier than thou."—Impossible again! We do not preach pharifaic but CHRISTIAN perfection, which consists in "perfect charity." which vaunteth not itself, bonours all men, and hears with the infirmities of the weak.

IV. " It fets repentance afide." Impossible!

for it is " perfect repentance."

V. "It will make us slight Christ."—More and more improbable! How can "perfect faith" in Christ, make us slight Christ? Could it be more absurd to say, that the perfect love of God will make us despite God?

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IV. " Itc

VI. "It will superfede the use of mortifications and watchfulness; for, if sin is dead, what need have we to mortify it, and to watch against

46 it ?".

This objection has fome plaufibility, I shall therefore answer it various ways.—(1) If Adam, in his state of paradisaical perfection, needed perfect watchfulness and perfect mortification; how much more do we need them, who find the tree of the knowledge of good and evil planted not only in the midit of our gardens, but in the midit of our houses, markets, and churches.—(2) When we are delivered from fin, are we delivered from pecca-bility and temptation? When the inward man of fin is dead, is the Devil dead? Is the corruption that is in the world destroy'd? And have we not still our five fenles to keep with all diligence, as well as our bearis, that the tempter may not enter into us, or that we may not enter into his temptations?—
Lastly: Jesus Christ, as son of Mary, was a perfect man? But how was he kept fo to the end? Was it not by keeping his mouth with a bridle, qubilethe angodly was in his fight, and by guarding all his senses with perfect alliduity, that the wicked one might not touch him to his hurt? And if Christ our head kept his human perfection only, thro watebfulness, and constant self-denial; is it not abfurd to suppose, that his perfect members can keep. their perfection, without treading in his steps?

VII. Another objection probably stands in Mr. Hill's way: It runs thus: "Your doctrine of per"fection makes it needless for perfect christians to
say the Lord's prayer: for if God vouchsafes
to keep us this day WITHOUT SIN, we shall have
no need to pray at night, that God would forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that tres-

pass against us."

we answer: (1) Tho' a perfect christian does not trespass voluntarily, and break the law of love, yet he daily breaks the law of Adamic perfection, thro' the imperfection of his bodily and mental powers:

powers : and he has frequently a deeper fente of these involuntary trespasses, than many weak believers have of their voluntary breaches of the moral law. (2) Altho' a perfect christian has a witne that his fins are now forgiven in the court of his confcience, yet he knows the terrors of the Lord : he: haftens to meet the awful day of God: he waits. for the appearance of our Lord Jefus Christ in the character of a righteous judge: he keeps an eye to the awful tribunal, before which he must foon be justified or condemned by his words: he is conscious: that his final juffification is not yet come; and therefore he would think himself a monster of stupidity and pride, if with an eye to his absolution. in the great day, he scrupled saying to the end of his life, Forgive us our trespasses. — (3) He is fur-rounded with finners, who daily trespass against bim, and whom he is daily bound to forgive; and hi praying that he may be forgiven now, and in the great day, as be forgives others, reminds him that he may forfeit his pardon, and binds him more and more to the performance of the important duty of forgiving his enemies .- And (4) His charity is fo. ardent that it melts him, as it were, into the common mass of mankind: Bowing himself therefore, under the enormous load of all the wilful trespattes which his fellow-mortals, and particularly his relatives and his brethren daily commit against God, he fays with a fervor that imperfect christians feldom feel : Forgive Us our trefpaffes, &c .- We are leartily forry for our misdoings (my own, and those of my fellow-finners:) The remembrance of them is: grievous unto us: The burthen of them is intolerable. Nor do we doubt, but, when the Spirit of mourning leads a numerous affembly of fupplicants into the vale of humiliation, the person who puts the shoulder of faith most readily to the common burden of fin, and heaves most powerfully in order to roll the enormous load into the Redeemer's grave, is she most perfect penitent—the most exact observer

of the apostolic precept, Bear ye one another's burdens, and fo fulfil the last of Christ; and, of confequence, we do not scruple to fay, that such a person is the most perfect christian in the whole:

affembly.

If Mr. Hill confiders these answers, we doubt not but he will confess that his opposition to christian perfection chiefly springs from his inattention to our definition of it, which I once more fum up in these comprehensive lines of Mr. Wesley.

O let me gain Perfection's height! O let me into nothing fall! (As less than nothing in thy fight) And feel that Christ is all in all!

VIII. Our opponents produce another plaufible objection, which runs thus: " It is plain from: wyour account of christian perfection, that adult believers are fret from fin; their hearts being " purified by perfect faith, and filled with perfect. " love. Now fin is that which humbles us, and-"drives as to Christ, and therefore, if we were free: " from indwelling fin, we should lose a most powerful incentive to bumility, which is the greatest

ornament of a true christian."

We answer: Sin never humbled any foul. Who has more fin than Satan? And who is prouder? Did fin make our first parents humble? If it did not, why do our brethren suppose that its nature is. altered for the better ?- Who was humbler than Christ? but was he indebted to fin for his bumility? -Do we not fee daily, that the more finful menare, the prouder they are also ?-Did Mr. Hill never observe, that the bolier a believer is, the bumbler he shows himself? And what is boliness, but the reverse of fin? - If fin is necessary to make usbumble, and to keep us near Christ; does it not follow that glorified faints, whom all acknowledge to be finless, are all proud despisers of Christ? If bumility is obedience, and if fin is disobedience, is

it not as abfurd to fay, that for will make us bumble, i. e. obedient; as it is to affirm that rebellion will make us loyal, and adultery, chafte? - See we not fin enough, when we look ten or twenty years back, to humble us to the dust for ever, if fin can do it? Need we plead for any more of it in our hearts or lives ?- If the fins of our youth do not humble us, are the fins of our old age likely to do it?-If we contend for the life of the man of fin, that he may fubdue our pride; do we not take a large stride after those who fay, " Let us fin that grace may abound. Let us continue full of indwelling fin that humility may increase?"-What is, after all, the evangelical method of getting humility? Is it not to look at Christ in the manger, in Gethsemane, or on the crofs; to confider him when he wash his disciples feet; and obediently to listen to him when he fays, Learn of ME to be meek and lowly in beart?—Where does the gospel plead the cause of the Barabbas, and the thieves within? Where does it fay, that they may indeed be nailed to the crof and have their legs broken; but that their life my be left whole within them, left we should be proud of their death?—Lastly: What is indwelling fin but indwelling pride? At least is not inbred pride one of the chief ingredients of indwelling fin? And how can pride be productive of humility? Can a serpent beget a dove? And will not men gather grapes from thorns, fooner than humility of heart from haughtiness of spirit?

IX. The strange mistake which I detect, would not be so prevalent among our prejudiced brethren, if they were not deceived by the plausibility of the following argument. "When believers are hum"bled for a thing they are humbled by it: But

" believers are humbled for fin; and therefore, they are humbled by fin."

PROPER

The flaw of this argument is in the first propofition. We readily grant that penitents are bunbled for fin; or, in other terms, that they humbly repent repent of fin: But we deny that they are bumbled by fin. To show the absurdity of the whole argument, I need only produce a sophism exactly parallel. "When people are blooded for a thing, they are blooded by it: But people are sometimes blooded for a cold: And therefore people are sometimes blooded by a cold.

X. "We do not affert that all perfection is imaginary. Our meaning is that all christian perfection is in Christ; and that we are perfect in

" his person, and not in our own."

Anf. If you mean by our being perfect only in Christ, that we can attain to christian perfection no other way, than by being perfectly grafted in him, the true wine; and by deriving, like vigorous branches, the perfect sap of his perfect righteousness, to enable us to bring forth fruit unto perfection; we are entirely agreed: For we perpetually affert, that nothing but Christ in us the hope of glory, nothing but Christ dwelling in our hearts by faith, or, which is all one, nothing but the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, can make us free from the law of sin, and perfect us in love.

But, as we never advanced, that christian perfection is attainable any other way, than by a faith that roots and grounds us IN CHRIST; we doubt fome mystery of iniquity lies hid under these equivocal phrases, "All our perfection is in Christ's "person:—We are perfect in him, and not in

" ourselves."

Should those who use them, infinuate by such language, that we need not, cannot be perfect, by an inherent personal conformity to God's holiness, because Christ is thus perfect for us: Or should they mean, that we are perfect in him, just as country-free-holders, entirely strangers to state-affairs, are perfect politicians in the knights of the Shire who represent them in parliament:—as the sick in an hospital, are perfectly healthy in the physician, that gives them his attendance:—as the blind man enjoyed perfect sight in Christ when he saw walking men.

men like moving trees:—as the filthy leper was perfectly clean in our Lord, before he had felt the power of Christ's gracious words, I will, be thou clean:—or, as hungry Lazarus was perfectly fed in the person of the rich man, at whose gate he lay starving:—Should this, I say, be your meaning, we are in conscience bound to oppose it, for the reasons contained in the following queries.

(1) If believers are perfect, because Christ is perfect for them; why does the apostle exhort

them to go on to perfection?

(2) It all our perfection is inherent in Christ, is it not strange, that St. Paul should exhort us to PERFECT hel wess in the fear of God, by cleaning ourselves from ALL filthiness of the stell and spirit? Did not Christ perfect his own holiness? And will his personal fanctity be imperfect, till we have cleansed ourselves from all desilement?

(3) If Christ is perfect for us, why does St. James say, Let patience have her perfect work, that XE may be perfect? Is Christ's perfection suspended

upon the perfect work of our patience?

St. Peter mean, when he fays, After ve have fuffered a while, the Lord make you perfect? What has our suffering a while to do with Christ's perfection? Was not Christ made perfect thro his own

Sufferings?

(5) If believers were perfect in Christ's person, they would all be equally perfect. But is this the case? Does not St. John talk of some who are perfected, and of others who are not yet made perfect in love? Besides, the Apostle exhorts us to be perfect, not in antinomian notions, but in all the will of God, and in every good work; and common sense dictates, that there is some difference between our good works, and the person of Christ.

(6) Does not our Lord himself show, that his personal righteousness will by no means be accepted instead of our personal persection, where he says, " Every branch in me that beareth not fruit

(or

for whose fruit never grows to any perfection. See Luke viii. 14.) my Father taketh away, far from

imputing to it my perfect fruitfulness"?

(7) Can, in the nature of things, Christ's perfection supply the want of that perfection which he calls us to? Is there not a more effential difference between Christ's perfection and that of a believer, than there is between the perfection of a rose and that of the grass of the field?-between the perfection of a foaring eagle and that of a creeping infect?-If our Lord is the head of the church and we the members, is it not abfurd to suppose that his perfection becomes us in every respect? Were I allowed to carry on a scriptural metaphor, I would ask: Is not the perfection of the bead very different from that of the band? And do we not take advantage of the credulity of the fimple, when we make them believe, that an impenitent adulterer and murderer is perfect in Christ; or, if you please, that a crooked leg and cloven foot are perfectly handsome, if they do but some how belong to a beautiful face?

(8) Let us illustrate this a little more. Does not the Redeemer's personal perfection consist in his being God and man in one person;—in his being eternally begotten by the Father as the Son of God; and unbegotten in time by a father, as the Son of man;—in his having given bis life a ransom for all;—in his having taken it up again; and his standing in the midst of the throne, able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God thro bim? Consider this, candid believer, and say if any man or angel can decently hope, that such an incommunicable persection can ever

fall to his share.

(9) As the Redeemer's personal persection cannot suit the redeemed, no more can the personal persection of the redeemed be sound in the Redeemer. A believer's persection consists in such a degree of faith as works by PERFECT love. And does not this high degree of faith chiefly imply: (1) Uninterrupted self-diffidence, self-denial, self-despair?

(2) An

(2) An heart-felt, ceaseless recourse to the blood merits, and righteousness of Christ?—And (3) A grateful love to him, because be first loved us, and tervent charity towards all mankind for bis sake? Three things these, which, in the very nature of things, either cannot be in the Saviour at all; or cannot possibly be in him, in the same manner in

which they must be in believers.

(10) Is not the doctrine of our being perfect in Christ's person, big with mischies? Does it not open a refuge of lies to the loosest ranters in the land? Are there none who say, We are perfect in Christ's person. In him we have perfect chastity and honesty, perfect temperance and meekness; and we should be guilty of pharisaic insolence if we patched his perfection with the filthy rags of our personal holiness? And has not this doctrine a direct tendency to set godliness aside, and to countenance

gross antinomianism?

Lastly: When our Lord preached the doctrine of perfection, did he not do it in fuch a manner as to demonstrate that our perfection must be personal. Did he ever fay, If thou wilt be perfect, only be-lieve that I am perfect for thee? On the contrary did he not declare, If thou wilt be perfect, fell what thou haft; [part with all that stands in thy way;] and follow me in the way of perfection?—And again: Do GOOD to them that hate you, THAT YE MAY BE the children of your Father who is in beaven; for he fendeth rain on the just and on the unjust, &c. Be ye therefore PERFECT, even as your Father cube is in beaven is perfect? Who can read these words and not see, that the perfection which Christ preaches, is a perfection of holy dispositions, productive of holy actions in all his followers? And that, of consequence, it is a personal perfection, as much inherent IN Us, and yet as much derived FROM HIM, and dependent UPON HIM, as the perfection of our bodily health? The chief difference confifting in this; that the perfection of our health comes

to us from God in Christ, as the God of nature; awhereas our christian perfection comes to us from God in Christ, as the God of grace.

SECTION IV.

Mr. Hill's first argument against christian perfection is taken from the IXth and XVth Articles of the Church of England. These Articles properly understood are not contrary to that doctrine.—That our Church holds it, is proved by thirteen arguments.—She opposes pharisaic perfection and not christian perfection.—Eight reasons are produced to show, that it is absurd to embrace the doctrine of a death-purgatory because our reformers and martyrs, in following after the perfection of humilis, have used some unguarded expressions, which seem to bear hard upon the doctrine of christian perfection.

N the preceding fections I have laid the ax at the root of fome prejudices, and cut up a variety of objections. The controverfial field is cleared. The engagement may begin: Nay, it is already begun : for Mr. Hill in his Creed for Perfectionists, and Mr. Toplady in his Caveat against unfound doctrines, have brought up, and fired at our dectrine two pieces of ecclefialtical artillery;—the IXth and XVth Articles of our church: And they conclude that the contents of these doctrinal cannons absolutely demolish the perfection we contend for. The report of their wrong-pointed ordnance, and the noise they make about our subscriptions, are loud; but that we need not be afraid of the thot, will, I hope, appear from the following obfervations.

The defign of the XVth Art. of our church is pointed out by the title, "Of Christ alone without sin." From this title we conclude, that the scope and defign of the Article is not to secure to Christ the

the honour of being alone CLEANSED from first because such an honour would be a reproach to his original and uninterrupted purity, which placed him far above the need of cleanfing. Nor does the Article drop the least hint about the impossibility of our being cleanfed from fin before we go into the purgatory of the calvinists; I mean, the chambers What our church intends, is to diffinof death. guish Christ from all mankind, and especially from the virgin Mary, whom the papifts affert to have been always totally free from original and actual fin. Our church does this by maintaining: (1) That Christ was born without the least taint of original fin, and never committed any actual transgreffion : - (2) That all other men, the virgin Mary and the most holy believers not excepted, are the very reverse of Christ in both these respects; all being conceived in original fin, and offending in many things, even after baptism*, and with all the helps which we have under the christian dispensation to keep us without fin from day to day. -And therefore (3) That if we fay we have no fin—if we pretend, like some Pelagians, that we have no original sin; or if we intimate, like some pharisees, that "we never did any harm in all our life," i. e. that we have no actual fin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us; there being absolutely no adult person without fin in those respects, except our Lord Jesus Christ,

That this is the genuine sense of the Article appears: (1) By the absurdity which sollows from

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^{*} The Rev. Mr. Toplady in his Historic Proof, page 253, informs us, that a popish Archbishop of St. Andrews condemned Paprick Hamelton to death, for holding, among other doctrines, "That children incontinent after baptism are \$1888283," or, which is all one, that baptism does not absolutely take away original sin. This anecdote is important, and shews, that our church levels at a popish error, the words of her Articles, which which Mr. Hill and Mr. Toplady suppose to be levelled as christian perfection.

the contrary sentiment. For, if these words, "Cbrist alone without sin," are to be taken in an absolute and unlimited sense; if the word alone entirely excludes all mankind, AT ALL TIMES; if it is levelled at our being cleansed from sin, as well as at our baying been always free from original and actual pollution;—if this is the case, I say, it is evidentthat, not only Fathers in Christ, but also, Enoch and Elijah, St. John and St. Paul are to this day tainted with sin, and must to all eternity continue so, less Mr. Hill's opinion of Christ Alone

without fin, should not be true.

(2) Our fentiment is confirmed by the Article itself, part of which runs thus: "Christ, in "the truth of our nature, was made like unto "us in all things, sin only except, from which he was clearly void, both in his stesh and in his seeing the came to be a lamb without spot:—"and sin, as St. John says, was not in him. But all we the rest, altho' baptized and born again in Christ," [i. e. altho' we have from our infancy all the belps that the christian dispensation affords men to keep them without sin] "yet offend in many things" (after our baptism) "and if we say!" [as the above-mentioned Pelagians and pharisees] "that "we have no" [original, or no actual] "fin," [i. e. that we are like Christ in either of these respects; our conception, infancy, childbood, youth, and age being all taken into the account] "we deceive ourselves "and the truth is not in us."

Having thus opened the plain, rational, and feriptural fense in which we subscribe to our XVth. Article, it remains to make a remark upon the Ninth.

Some bigotted Pelagians deny original fin, or the Adamic infection of our nature, and fome bigoted Papists suppose that this infection is entirely done away in baptism: In opposition to both these our Church prudently requires our subscription to her IXth Article, which afferts: (1) That the fault and corruption

corruption of our nature is a melancholy reality: and (2) That this fault, corruption, or infection deth remain in them who are regenerated; that is, in th who are baptized, or made children of God according to the christian dispensation. For every person w has attentively read our liturgy knows, that these expressions, baptized, regenerated, and made a ber of Christ and a child of God, are fynonymous in the language of our church. Now, because we have acknowledged by our subscription to the Ninth Article, that the infection of nature is not done away in baptifin, but does remain in them qubici are regenerate, or baptized, Mr. Hill thinks himfelf authorized to impose upon us the yoke of indwelling fin for life; supposing that we cannot be fair Subscribers to that Article, unless we renounce the glorious liberty of God's children, and embrace the actinomian gospel, which is fummed up in these unguarded words of Luther, quoted by Bo-gatzky in his Golden Treasury. "The sins of a christian are for his good, and if he bad no fin be would u not be so well off; -neither would prover flow s es quell:" Can any thing be either more unfcriptural or abfurd? What unprejudiced person does not see, We may with the greatest confisency maintain, that baptism pors Nor remove the Adamic infection of fin, and that nevertheless this infection. MAY BE removed BEFORE DEATH-

Nevertheless we are willing to make Mr. Hill all the concessions we can, consistently with a good conficience. If, by "the infection of nature" he understands the natural ignorance, which has infected our understanding; the natural forgetfulness, which has affected our memory: the inbred debility of all our mental powers, and the poisonous seeds of mortality, which infect all men from head to foot, and hinder the strongest believers from serving God with all the servor they would be capable of, were they not fallen from paradisaical perfection, under the curse of a body sentenced to die, and dead be-

because

^{*} See the edition printed in London in 1773. page 318.

because of sin:—If Mr. Hill, I say, understands this by "the insection of nature," we believe that such an insection, with all the natural, innocent appetites of the slesh, remains not only in those whom the scriptures call babes in Christ, but also in Fathers; there being no adult believer that may not say, as well as Christ, Adam, or St. Paul, I thirst.—I am bungry.—I want an belp meet for me.—I know but in part.—I see darkly thro a glass.—I grown being burden d.—He that marrielb SINNETH NOT.—It is

better to marry than to burn, &c.

But, if Mr. Hill, by "the infection of nature," means the finful lusts of the flesh, such as mental drunkennels, gluttony, whoredom, &c.—or, if he understands unloving, diabolical tempers, such as envy, pride, stubborness, malice, finful anger, ungodly jealoufy, unbelief, fretfulness, impati-ence, hypocrify, revenge, or any moral opposition to the will of God :- If Mr. Hill, I fay, understands this, by " the infection of nature;" and if he supposes, that these evils must radically and necessarily remain in the hearts of all believers [fathers in Christ not excepted | till death comes to cleanse the thoughts of their hearts by the inspiration of his illfmelling breath; we must take the liberty of dif-Tenting from him; and we produce the following arguments to prove, that whatever Mr. Hill may infinuate to the contrary, the Church of England is not against that doctrine of evangelical perfection which we vindicate.

I. Our Church can never be so inconsistent as to level her articles against what she ardently prays for in her liturgy: But she ardently prays for christian perfection, or for perfect love in this life: Therefore she is not against christian perfection. The second proposition of this argument can alone be disputed, and I support it by the well-known collect in the communion-service. "Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of thy holy spirit, that we may perfectly love thee,

" thee, and WORTHILY MAGNIFY thy holy " name, thro' Jesus Christ our Lord." Here we fee (1) The nature of christian perfection; it is perfect love; (2) The feat of this perfect love; an heart cleansed from its own thoughts : (3) The bleffed effect of it, a worthy magnifying of God's boly name: (4) It's author, God, of whom the bleffing is afked. (5) The immediate means of it, the inspiration of

the holy Spirit: And laftly, the gracious procurer

of it, our Lord Tejus Chrift.

II. This vein of Godly defire after christian perfection runs thro' her daily fervice. In her confession she prays, " Restore thou them that are " penitent, according to thy promifes, &c. that hereafter we may LIVE a godly, righteous, and " fober LIFE to the glory of thy holy name." Now godliness, righteousness, and sobriety being the fum of our duty towards God, our neighbour, and ourselves, are also the sum of christian perfection. Nor does our Church absolve any, but such as defire that the reft of their life may be PURE and HOLY, fo that at the last they may come to God's eternal joy; plainly intimating that we may get a pure beart, and lead a pure and boly life, without going into a death-purgatory; and that those who do not attain to purity of heart and life, that is, to perfection, are in danger of missing God's eternal joy.

III. Hence it is, that she is not assumed to pray daily for finless purity, in the Te Deum: " Vouchfafe. " O Lord, to keep us this day without fin," that is, foilefs; for I suppose, that the title of our XVth Article, " Of Christ alone WITHOUT SIN," means Of Christ alone SINLESS from his conception to his last gasp. This deep petition is perfectly agreeable to the collects for the ix, xvii, xviii, and xixth fundays after Trin. "Grant to us the fpirit to " THINK, and DO ALWAYS fuch things as be " rightful,—that we may be enabled to LIVE AC-" CORDING TO THY WILL,"-i. e. to live without fin.-" We pray thee, that thy grace may al-" suays prevent and follow us, and make us to be

se continually

continually given to all good everks." &c. --"Grant thy people grace to withstand the temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil, " and with PURE bearts and minds to follow thee. Mercifully grant, that thy holy Spirit may "IN ALL THINGS direct and rule our hearts."-Again: " May it please thee, that by the wholeof form medicines of the doctrine delivered by him [Luke, the evangelist and physician of the foul,]; " ALL THE DISEASES OF OUR SOULS may be " healed," &cc. St. Luke's day .- " MORTIFY. " and KILL IN US ALL vices" [and among thems envy, felfishmess, and pride;] " and so strengthen. us by thy grace, that by the ENNOCENCY of our " LIVES, and CONSTANCY of our FAITH even " UNTO DEATH, we may glorify thy holy name," &c. The Innocents Day .- " Grant us the help of thy grace, that in KEEPING THY COMMAND-" MENTS we may please thee BOTH IN WILL and " DEED." I Sund. aft. Trin -" Direct, fanctify, and govern both our HEARTS and BODIES, in: "the ways of thy laws and in the works of thy commandments, that we may be preferved" [inthefe ways and works " in BODY and soul." " Prevent us in ALL our doings, &c. and FUR-" THER us with thy CONTINUAL help; that in: ALL our works REGUN, CONTINUED, and ENDto in thee, we may GLORIFY THY HOLY "NAME." Com. Service.—Once more: "Grants that in ALL our fufferings here on earth, &c. we may stedfastly look up to heaven, and by " faith behold the glory that shall be revealed; " and being FILLED with the Holy Ghoft, may to learn to BLESS OUR PERSECUTORS by the ex-" ample of thy first marryr," &cc. St. Stephen's day. It is worth our notice, that bleffing our perjecutors and murderers, is the last beatitude, the highest instance: of christian persection, and the most difficult of all the duties, which [if we may believe our Lord] constitute us perfect, in our sphere, as our beavenly Pasher is perfedt. Seo Mat. v. 11, 44, 45, 48. IN . Perfeat

IV. Perfect love, i. e. christian perfection instantaneously springs from perfect faith: and as our church would have all her members perfect in love, she requires them to pray thus for PERFECT faith, which must be obtained in this life or never. "Grant us for PERFECTLY, and WITHOUT ALL DOUBT TO ELLIEVE in thy Son Jesus Christ, that our faith in thy fight may never be reproved." St. Thomas's day.

V. Our Lord teaches us to alk for the highest degree of christian perfection, where he commands us When we pray to say, &c. Thy kingdom come: The will be done on EARTH as it is in heaven. And our church, by introducing this deep prayer in all her services, shows how greatly Mr Hill is mistaken when he supposes, that she looks upon our doctrine

of christian perfection as " Spocking."

Should that gentleman object that altho our church bids us pray for christian perfection in the above-cited collects and in our Lord's prayer, yet the does not intimate that these deep prayers may be answered in this life: I oppose to that argument, not only the word on EARTH, which the fo frequently mentions in the Lord's prayer, but also her own words, " Everlasting God, who art MORE " ready to hear than we to pray, and art wont to " give MORE than we defire, &c. pour down upon " us the ABUNDANCE of thy mercy, &c. xii. Sund. after Trin. Mr. Hill must therefore excuse us, if we fide with our praying Church, and are not ashamed to fay with St. Paul, Glory be to bim that is able to do exceeding ABUNDANTLY ABOVE ALL THAT WE ASK or think, according to the power that WORK-ETH IN US. Eph. iii. 20.

VI. That our church cannot reasonably be against christian persection, I farther prove thus: What the church of England recommends as the end of baptism, can never be contrary to her doctrine. But she recommends a DEATH UNTO SIN, or christian persection, as the end of baptism: Therefore she cannot be against christian persection. The

fecond

fecond proposition, which alone is disputable, I prove by these words of her Catechism: " What is the inward or spiritual grace in baptism? A DEATH UNTO.SIN, and a new birth unto righteourness."-Hence she prays at the grave, "We befeech thee to RAISE US from THE death of fin to the life of righteoufness, that when we shall depart this life we may rest in him" (Christ.) Now, that a death to fin, is the end of baptism, and that this end is never fully answered till this death has fully taken place, is evident by the following extract from our baptismal office: "Grant that the old Adam in this person may be so EURIED, that " the new man may be raised up in him. - Grant " that ALL CARNAL AFFECTIONS" (and confequently all the carnal mind, and all inbred fin) " may DIE IN HIM; and that ALL THINGS belonging to the spirit may LIVE and GROW in him.-"Grant that the person now to be baptized may " receive the FULNESS OF THY GRACE.—Grant, " that he BEING DEAD TO. SIN, and living to " righteousness, and being BURIED with Christ in 44 his death, may crucify the old man, and " UTTERLY ABOLISH the WHOLE BODY OF SIN." How can we maintain with our church, that we are to crucify, MORTIFY, [i. e. KILL,] and UTTERLY AROLISH THE WHOLE BODY OF SIN; fo as to be DEAD TO SIN, and to have THE OLD ADAM BURIED in this life; and yet hold with Mr. Hill, that this whole body of fin, which WE ARE UTTERLY TO ABOLISH is to remain wholly and utterly un-abolished till death come to abolish it?

VII. Our Church is not against that end of the Lord's supper, which she constantly inculcates: But that end of the Lord's supper, which she constantly inculcates is christian perfection: Therefore our church is not against christian perfection. The second proposition, which alone needs proof, is founded upon these deep words of our communion service.

"Grant us so to eat the slesh of thy dear son Jesus

"Christ, and to drink his blood, that our finful

our souls washed thro' his precious blood, and that we may EVERMORE DWELL IN HIM and HE IN US." These words express the height of christian perfection, nor has the Lord's supper had its full end upon us, till that prayer is answered.

VIII. Our church is not against what she considers as the end of Christ's nativity, and of his being presented in the temple. But what she considers as that end, is christian perfection: Therefore she is not against christian perfection. The second proposition of this argument is founded, (1) Upon the proper presace for Christmas-day in the communion service. "Christ, &c. was made very man, &c. "without spot of sin, to make us CLEAN FROM ALL SIN:" And (2) upon these words of the collect for the presentation of Christ in the temple: "We humbly beseech thee, that, as thy only begotten son was presented in the temple in substance of our sless; so we may be presented unto

thee with PURE and CLEAN HEARTS."

IX. The fame argument holds good with refpect to our Lord's circumcifion, his keeping of the paffover with unleavened bread, his afcending into heaven—and his fending the Comforter from thence. That, according to our church, the end of these events was our christian perfection appears by the following extracts from her collects. "Grant us the true circumcifion of the spirit, that our bearts and ALL our members being MORTIFIED from ALL worldly and carnal lufts, we may IN ALL THINGS obey, &c. [The circumcission of Christ.]-Grant us so to PUT AWAY the leaven of malice and wickednels, that we may ALWAY ferve thee in PURENESS of living and truth. [1 Sund. after Eafter.] Grant, &c. that we may also in HEART AND MIND thither [to beaven] afcend, and with him [Christ] con-Dy the same spirit, to have a kight judgment in ALL things, and EVERMORE to rejoice in his HOLY COMFORT. [Whitfunday.] K. Our

X. Our Church cannot reasonably oppose what the ardently wishes to all her communicants, and what she earnestly asks for and strongly recommends to all her members: But she thus wishes, asks, and recommends deliverance from all fins and perfect charity, that is, CHRISTIAN PERFECTION: And therefore the cannot be against CHRISTIAN PER-FECTION, The fecond proposition is founded, (1) Upon these words of the absolution, which she gives to all her communicants. "Almighty God, " &c. pardon and DELIVER YOU FROM ALL YOUR " SINS, CONFIRM AND STRENGTHEN YOU IN "ALL GOODNESS." — (2) Upon her collect for quinquagefima funday: "Send thy Holy Ghost, "and POUR INTO OUR HEARTS that MOST EX-" CELLENT GIFT of charity, the VERY BOND of " peace and of ALL VIRTUES:" (St Paul calls it the BOND' OF PERFECTION.)—And (3) Upon the definition which the gives us of Charity in her homilies. . " Charity [fays she] is to love God " with ALL our heart, ALL our foul, and ALL " our powers and strength. - With ALL our " heart: that is to fay, that our heart, mind, and " fludy be fet to believe his word, and to love him above ALL things, that we love best in " heaven or in earth. With ALL our foul: that " is to fay, that our chief joy and delight be let " upon him, and our subole life given to his fer-" vice.-With ALL our power: that is to fay, " that with our hands and feet, with our eyes and " ears, our mouths and tongues, and with ALL our of parts and powers, BOTH OF BODY AND SOUL, " we should be given to the KEEPING of his com-" mandments. This is the principal part of cha-" rity, but it is not the whole: For charity is also " to love every man, good and evil, friend and foe, "whatfoever cause be given to the contrary." Hom. on Charity.- " Of charity he [St. John] fays, " He that doth keep God's word and command-" ment, IN HIM IS TRULY THE PERFECT LOVE or God, &c. And St. John wrote not this as N. Our

" a fubtle faying, &c. but as a most certain " and NECESSARY truth." Hom. of Faith, Part II. "Thus it is declared unto you, what true " charity or christian love is, &c. which love was-" SOEVER KEEPETH, not only towards God, whom "he is bound to love above all things, but also "towards his neighbour, as well friend as foe, it " SHALL SURELY KEEP HIM FROM ALL OFFENCE " of God, and just offence of MAN." He of Charity; Part II .- Again: " Every man per fuadeth himfelf to be in charity, but let I " examine his own heart, his life and converfa-" tion, and he shall truly discern, whether he be " in PERFECT charity or not. For he that followeth not his own will, but giveth himfelf carneftly to God, to do ALL his will and commander " he may be fure that he leveth God above all " things, or elfe furely he loveth him not, whatmore: " PERFECT Patience careth not what, nor " how much it fuffereth, nor of whom it fuffereth " whether of friend or foe, but studieth to fu " innocently. Yea he in whom PERFECT chari " is, careth fo little to revenge, that he rath " fludieth to do good for evil, according to the most perfect example of Christ upon the cross-" SUCH CHARITY and love as Christ shewed in his " passion, should we bear one to another, if we " will be his true fervants. If we love but the that love us, what great thing do we do? We " must be PERFECT in our charity, even as our Fa-" ther in heaven is PERFECT." Hom. for Go Friday.

XI. That state which our church wants all her priests to bring their slocks to, is not a "shocking" or chimerical state: But she wants all her Priests to bring all their slocks to perfection in Christ, that is to christian perfection: And therefore the state of christian perfection is neither shocking nor chimerical. The minor, which alone is contestable, rests upon this awful part of the charge, which all her bishops

give to her priests. " See that you never cease your labour, care, and diligence, until you have 44 done ALL that lieth in you, to bring ALL fuch as shall be committed to your charge, unto that " agreement of faith, and that ripenels and PER-46 FECTNESS of age in Christ, that there be no place lest among you for error in religion, or viciousness in life." Ordin. Office.

XII. Nor is our church less strict with the laity than with the clergy; for the receives none into her congregation, but fuch as profess a determination of coming up to christian perfection. Accordingly all her members have folemnly promis'd and word by their sponsors at their baptism, and in their own persons when they were confirmed by the bishop: (1) To renounce the devil and ALL his works. the pemps and vanities of this wicked world without referve, and ALL the finful lufts of the flesh: (2) To believe ALL the articles of the christian faith; and (3) To KEEP GOD'S boly will and COMMANDMENTS, and WALK in the same ALL the days of their life. And is not this vowing to perfect beliness in the fear of God? Does the first part of this facred engagement, leave any room for a moment's agreement with the devil, the world, or the flesh? Does the fecond make the least allowance, for one doubt with respect to any one article of the christian faith? Or the third, for one wilful breach of God's commandments?—Again, are not these commandments thus fumm'd up in our Church-Catechism: I learn in them my auty towards God, which is to love bim with all my heart-and my duty towards my neighbour, which is to love bim as myself? Is not this perfect love, or christian perfection? And have we not wow'd to walk in the same all the days of our life? As many church-men therefore, as make confcience of keeping their baptismal vow, must not only go on, but attain, unto perfection; and if there have been no perfect christians in our Church, all her members have died in the actual breach of the awful promise, which they made in their baptism; A supposition too shocking either to make or allow,

If you ask, Where are those perfect churchment or christians? I answer: that if the perfect bose that keeps the commandments is unattainable, our baptisinal vow is absurd and detestable; for it is both irrational and very wicked to vow things absolutely impossible. But this is not all: upon that supposition the bible, which makes such frequent mention of the perfect and of perfection, is no better than a popish legend; for that book ought to rank among religious romances, which recommends imaginary things as if they were indubitable realities. So sure then as the bible is true, there are or may be perfect chairmans: but

Virtutem incolumem odimus, Sublatam ex oculis quærimus invidi.

While we honour dead faints, we call those who are alive enthufiafts, hypocrites, or heretics: " It is not proper therefore, to expose them to the darts of envy and malice. And suppose living witnesses of perfect love were produced, what would be the confequence? Their testimony would be excepted against by those who diffelive the doctrine of christian perfection, just as the testimony of the believers, who enjoy the fenfe of their justification, is rejected by those who do not believe, that a clear experience of the peace and pardoning love of God is attainable in this life. If the original, direct perfection of Christ himself, was horribly blacken'd by his bigotted opposers, how could the derived, reflected perfection of his members, escape the same treatment from men. whose hearts are tinctured with a degree of the fame bigotry?

Add to this, that in order to harden unbelievers, the accuser of the brethren perpetually obtrudes upon the church, not only falle witnesses of perdoning grace, but also vain pretenders to perfect here. For he knows, that by putting off as many counterfeits as he possibly can, he will give the enemies

of the truth room to fay, that there is in the church no gold purified seven times,—no coin truly stamped with the king's image, perfect love; and bearing the royal inscription, Holiness unto the

Lords.

Therefore, instead of faying, that this or the other eminent believer has attained christian perfection, we rest the cause upon the experience of St. John, and of those with whom that apostle could fay: -There is no occasion of stumbling in him that loveth.-Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment, because [with respect to holiness] as he is [in his human nature] so ARE WE IN THIS WORLD-pure, undefiled and filled with perfect love; with this difference nevertheless, that he is in the kingdom of glory, and we in the kingdom of grace: He has a glorified, and we a corruptible body: He has the original perfection of a tree, and we the derived perfection of branches growing upon it. Or, to use another comparison, He shines with the com-municative perfection of a pure, bright, unextinguishable fire; and we with the borrowed and yet inherent perfection of a coal entirely lighted. The burning mineral was black, cold and filthy, before it was impregnated with the perfection of the fire; it continues bright, hot, and pure only fo long as it remains in the fire that kindled it: For if it falls

Among the professors, who have lately set up as witnesses of perset love, I am not a little surprized to find Mr. Hill himfels: This gentleman, who has treated Mr. Wesley with such severity, for standing up in desence of persect love, or christian persection, most solemnly ranks himsels among the persect lovers of their neighbour, yea of their adversaries! Hear him make his association persection before the world, at the end of his pamphlet, called The admonister admonisted:—

"I most solemnly declare" [says he] "that I am in persect charity with Dr. Adams, as well as with you, Sir, my unknown antagonist." I never yet heard a persectionist make so solemn, and so public a profession of persection.

falls from it by any accident, the shining perfections which it had acquired gradually vanishes, and it becomes a filthy cinder, the black emblem of an apostate. So true is that saying of our Lord! Without me, or rather, separate from me ye can be nothing: Ye can neither get nor keep, light and heat, knowledge and love. But, when we live not, and Christ liveth in us; when our life is hid with Christ in God, when we dwell in God and God dwells in us; then it is, that our love is made PERFECT, and that [loving one another even as Christ bath loved us] as he is loving, so ARE WE IN THIS WORLD.

1 John, iv. 17.

Such was the avowed experience of FATHERS IN CHRIST in the apostolic times, and such it undoubtedly is also in our days. Nor can I persuade myself that our church trisses with her children when she describes the perfect Christian thus, in her Homily for good Friday. "HE IN WHOM PER-"

FECT CHARITY IS; careth so little to revenge, that he rather studieth to do good for evil, according to the MOST PERFECT example of Christ upon the

u crofs."

XIII. If Mr. Hill replies, that our church fpeaks. there of a mere non-entity; and that we can never have a grain of perfect charity in this life, because the old leaven of indevelling fin will always corrupt the fweetness of our tempers before God; I anfwer his objection by producing my last proof, that our church holds the very doctrine, for which we are called perfectionifis. Hear her prefing perfect love and purity upon all her communicants, and upon all her feeble children: (1) Upon all her communicants : " Have a LIVELY and STEDFAST: BAITH in Chrift, &c. and be in PERFECT CHARITY with ALL men." Com. Office. - And (2) Upon all her feeble children. Tho your power be weat, [fays. the to them | yet Christ is rifen again to strengthen you. in your battle : His Holy Spirit Shall belp your infirmities. In trust of his mercy take you in band to PURGE THIS OLD LEAVEN OF SIN, that corrupteth and Courette

foureth the fweetness of our life before God; that ye may be as NEW and fresh dough, VOID OF ALL SOUR LEA-VEN of wickedness; so shall ye show yourselves to be sweet bread to God, That be may have his DE-

LIGHT IN YOU? [Hom. on the Refur.]"

All the preceding arguments support our sense of the IXth and XVth Articles: And if Mr. Hill. urges, that our Church contradicts herfelf; and fometimes pleads for christian imperfection and a death-purgatory; we reply, that, supposing thecharge is well grounded, yet we ought rather to. follow her, when the foberly follows scripture, than when she hastily follows inconsistent Augustin. But we would rather hope; that when she speaks of human depravity in a manner, which feems to bear hard upon the preceding quotations, it is either when the speaks of human depravity in general; or when the inculcates the perfection of humility; or when the opposes the feigned perfection of those whom the ironically calls " proud, juft, PERFECT, and HOLY PHARISEES." Hom. on the mifery of man. -From thefe, and the like words therefore, we have as much reason to conclude, that she renounces true, christian bolines; as to infer, that she decries true, christian perfection. Besides, the delufion of those pharisees, who have missed a perfection of evangelical righteoufness and humility, and have attained a perfection of felf-righteoufness and pride, is: so horrible, and so diametrically opposite to the spirit of christianity, that our reformers deserve to. be excused, if they have sometimes opposed that, error in an unguarded manner; especially as they have so clearly and so frequently afferted the glorious liberty of God's children.

I shall close this vindication of the church of England by some remarks upon her "martyrs," whom Mr. Hill produces also in his creed; to keep the doctrine of christian impersection in counter-

mance.

⁽¹⁾ If any of our martyrs, speaking of his converted, renewed, and sanctified state, said, "I am

all fin," or words to that purpose, he spoke the words of unguarded humility, rather than the words of evangelical soberness: For a man may have grace and zeal enough to burn for one truth, without having time and prudence enough, properly to investigate and state every truth.

of bumility, may be tray an injudicious martyr into the use of expressions, which seem to class with the glorious liberty of God's children: just as an excessive sove for our friends may be tray us into an inju-

dicious and teafing officiousness.

(3) When a martyr confiders himself in his faiten state in Adam, or in his former state of disobedience, he may say, "Lam all sin," in the very
same sense in which St. Paul said, Lam the chief of
sinners. But, allow him time to explain himself,
and he will soon give you to understand; that he
rejoices in the testimony of a good conscience, purged from
diad works to serve the living God; and that, far from
harbouring any sin in himself, he is determined to
strive against sin in others; resisting unto blood. And
is not such a disposition as this, one of the highest
steps in the ladder of christian perfection?

(4) Hence it appears that the unguarded expressions of our martyrs were levelled at pharifaic pride, or at absolute persistion, and not at christian persection. Like some pious Calvinists in our days, they embraced christian persection in deed, whilst [thro misapprehension] they disclaimed it in word. And therefore their speeches against the glorious liberty of God's children show only, that christian persection is a persection of bumility and box, and not a

perfection of wildom and knowledge.

(5) If it can be proved that any of those, who rank among our martyrs, died full of indivelling fin. I will not scruple to say, that he died a migor, and not a MARTYR: For, to die sull of indwelling fin is to die sull of secret obstinacy and uncharitableness, and St. Paul declares, that, were an apostle himself to give his body to be burned in such a disposition, it would profit him nothing.

their lives in the field of battle, to defend their country against the French without being properly acquainted with the liberties and boundaries of the British empire: So many protestants have laid down their lives in Smithsfield, to defend their religion against the papists, without being acquainted with all the land-marks, which divide the land of spiritual Israel from that of the Philistines, and perfects

christianity from antinomian dotages.

(7) The jews can produce their martyrs as well as the protestants. The Maccabees, for example, died all entirely satisfied with the Mosaic covenant, and strangers to the transcendent glory of the christian dispensation. But is this a sufficient reason for preferring judaism to christianity?—Yes, if Mr. Hill is in the right, when he decries the doctrine of perfect sith and perfect love, and imposes upon us the doctrine of a death-purgatory, because some good men formerly died without having clear views of the doctrine of christian perfection; the like men that eat honey in the dark, they tasted it's sweetness, and delightfully experienced its power.

(8) To conclude: I am perfuaded, that, were: all our reformers and martyrs alive, none of them: would object to this argument, which fums up the doctrine of the church of England with respect topurgatory. If death cleanses us from indwelling fin, it is not Christ's blood applied by the spirit thro' faith .- But The ONLY PURGATORY guberein que [christian men] truft to be faved, is the DEATH AND BLOOD OF CHRIST, which, if we apprehend with a TRUE AND STEDFAST FAITH, it PURGETH and CLEANSETH us from ALL our fins. The BLOOD of Christ, fays St. John, HATH CLEANSED as from ALL. fin. Hom. on Prayer, Part iii .- Therefore, the doctrine that death, &c. cleanses us from indwelling fin; or the doctrine of a death-purgatory,' is as contrary, to the doctrine of our church, as to that of St. ohn. SECT.

SECTION V.

Mr. HILL intimates that the apostles were impersellenists.—St. Peter and St. James, far from pleading for a DEATH-PURGATORY, stand up for CHRISTIAN PERFECTION.

THEN Mr. Hill has fo unadvifedly brought the church of England against us, it is not furprizing to fee him press four apostles " Peter, " Paul, James and John," into the field to " cut " up" [as he calls it] " root and branch my favourite " doctrine of perfection." Never were these holy men fet upon a more unholy piece of work. Methinks I hear them fay, Let Mr. Hill rank us with the Gibeonites: Let him make us bewers of wood to the congregation for ever; but let him not fet us upon cutting up root and branch the lovely and fruitful tree of christian perfection.—Happily for that rare tree, Mr. Hill produces only the name of the apostolic wood-men, while we produce their as, and show that they lay it at the root of antinomic ifm; -a deadly tree this, which is to our favourite tree, what the fatal tree in paradife was to the tree of life. Mr. Hill appeals first to Poer: Let then Peter first answer for himself.

I. Where does that apostle plead for christian impersection, and a death-purgatory? Is it where he says, As he, who has called you, is holy; so be ye holy in all manner of conversation:—Seeing you have purified your souls, &c. love one another WITH A PURE HEART FERVENTLY:—Christ—less who did no sin—who have our fins, that we, being DEAD TO SIN, should LIVE TO RIGHTEOUSNESS:—For smuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the sless, arm your selves with the same mind; for he that has suffered in the sless, bath ceased from sin:
—The God of all grace, &c. after that ye have sufficeed a while make you perfect? Had Peter been against

against our doctrine, is it probable that he would thus have excited believers to attain persection; wishing it them as we wish our slocks the peace of

God which paffes all understanding?

If that apostle pleads not for the necessary indwelling of fin in his first epistle, doth he do it in the second? Is it where he fays, that Exceeding great and precious promises are given us, that by these we might be PARTAKERS OF THE DIVINE NATURE. boving ESCAPED THE POLLUTION THAT IS IN THE WORLD THRO' LUST? Is there indwelling fin in the divine nature? And can those people, whose heart is still full of fin and indwelling corruption, be faid to have escaped the pollution that is in the world thro' luft? Might not a man, whose lungs are still full of dangerous ulcers, be faid with as much propriety to have escaped the misery that is in the world thro confumptions?—Is it where St. Peter describes christian perfection, and exhorts believers to attain it, or to rife higher in it, by adding with all diligence, to faith, wirtue-to virtue, knowledgesemperance - patience - godlines - brotherly kindness - and charity, the key of the arch, and the bond of perfection? Is it where he states the difference between fallen believers, weak believers, and perfect christians; hinting, that the first LACK these things, i. e. christian graces: that these things ARE in the fecond :- and that they ABOUND in the third? Or is it where be bids us BE DILIGENT, that we may be found of God WITHOUT SPOT AND BLAMELESS? For my part, I do not fee here the shadow of a plea for the root of every evil in the heart of believers till they die, any more than for the fruit of adultery, murder, and incest in their life till they go hence.

But what principally strikes us in Mr. Hill's appeal to St. Peter is, that altho? Peter was naturally led by his subject to speak of the necessary indwelling of sin in our heart during the term of life, if that doctrine had been true; yet he does not so much as drop a hint about it. The design of his first epistle.

epiftle is undoubtedly to confirm believers, under the fiery trials which their faith meets with. You are kept, fays he, by the power of God, thro' [obedient faith unto falvation, wherein ye greatly rejoice, tho now for a season (if need be) ye are in beaviness shre manifold temptations. What a fair opportunity had Peter to fay here, without an if need be, " You MUST be in beaviness, not only thro manifold * TEMPTATIONS, but also thro' the REMAINING CORRUPTIONS OF YOUR HEARTS: The Canaantites, and the wild beafts MUST still dwell in the · land, to be goads in your fides and thorns in your eyes, or you would grow proud and careless: Your heart-leprofy must cleave to you, as Gebazi's leprofy cleaved to him. Death radically 4 cured him, and nothing but death can radically cure you. Till then your beads must remain full of imputed righteousness, and your bearts full of in-A dwelling fin. But happily for the honour of chriftianity, this antinomian, this impure gofpel has not the least countenance from St. Peter; and he cuts up the very root of it where he fays: Who Shall harm you, IF you be followers of that which is good-Commit the keeping of your fouls to God in WBLL-DO-ING, [the very reverse of SINNING.]-You are bis daughters [the daughters of him to whom God faid, Walk before me and be thou perfect, fo long as ye Do WELL, and ARE NOT AFRAID with any amazement, i. e. forlong as your conduct and tempers become the gospel. And every body knows, that a man's tempers are always as his heart; and that, if his heart is full of evil, his tempers cannot be FULL OF GOODNESS. Rom. XV. 14.

II. If St. Peter, the first of Mr. Hill's witnesses, does not say one word to countenance antinomianism, and to recommend christian impersection; let us see if St. James pleads for Baal in the beart, any more than for Baal in the life of persect believers. Turn to his epistle, O ye that thirst after holiness, and to your comfort you will find, that in the first chapter he shows himself a bold afferter

der Perfect work, that ye may be perfect, and entire, wanting nothing.—He speaks the same language in other places. Whose tooketh into the perfect law of liberty and continueth therein, be, being a doer of the work, shall be blessed in his defends not in word, the same is a perfect man. Nor is it difficult to demonstrate from his second chapter, that established believers, or perfect christians, keep the royal, perfett law of liberty; and that those who break it in one point are in a deplorable case.

If Mr. Welley had written an epiftle to antinomian believers, to make them go on to christian perfection; could be have expressed himself in a stronger manner than St. James does in the following passages? Grudge not one against another, bresbren, left ye be condemn'd [or damn'd.] James v. 9. Speak not evil one of another, brethren. He that judgeth his brother judgeth the law. But if thou judge the law, thou ART NOT A DOER OF THE LAW, but a judge. There is one lawgiver, who is able to fave and to destroy [those believers, who keep or break his royal law.] Jam. iv. 11, 12. - Again: If ye FULFIL THE ROYAL LAW, according to the fcripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, YE DO WELL: But [if ye do not fulfil it ;] if YE HAVE RESPECT to persons, YE COMMIT SIN. For whosever shall KEEP THE WHOLE LAW, and yet offend [i. e. COM-MIT SIN] in ONE POINT be is guilty of ALL, &c. SO SPEAK YE, AND so Do, as they that Shall be JUDGED by the LAW OF LIBERTY. Jam. ii. 8, &c.

What follows demonstrates, that fallen believers, if they do not repent and rife to the state of christian perfection will be condemned for one sin. St. James properly instances in the sin of uncharitableness, because it is directly contrary to our Lord's new commandment of loving one another as he has loved us, and because charity is the fulfilling of the royal law, and the hond

table believer, fays St. James in the uncharitable believer, fays St. James in the bretter of fifter be naked, and deflitute of described, and one of you [believers] toy, Be ye warmed and filled, not withflanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body, what does it profit? Even to faith if it bath not works [and of confequence, the fallen believer, if he has fin unrepented of] is dead.—Such a one is of the devil, for he committeth fin, and fin is the transgression of the law of liberty, by which he shall be judged, yea by which he shall have judged without mercy, that has [thus] henced no mercy; whether he sinned negatively by not relieving his poor brother in deed, the he gave him good words: or whether he did it positively, by having restal to persons, or by gradging against his brother. Compare Jam. ii. 13, &c. with John iii. 3, &c. to the end of both chapters, which are two strong batteries raised on purpose to defend the doctrine of christian persection, and to demolish the doctrine of christian impersection, which is all one with antinomianism.

Should it be objected, that, "at this rate, no "christian believer is sase, till he has attained "christian persection;" We reply, that all christian believers are sase, who either stand in it, or prose after it. And if they do neither, we are ready to prove, that they rank among sallen believers, and are in as imminent a danger of being stand out of Christ's month as the Landiceans were. Let Mr. Hill candidly read the Epistle to the Hebrews, the second Epistle of St. Peter, and the first of St. John, and let him doubt of it is he can.

Should Mr. Hill object, that "St. James himself fays, In many things WE offend ALL; and that this one saying abundantly proves that he was a strong imperfectionist:" I beg leave to involve my honoured opponent in the following dilemma. Are the offences, of which St. James speaks, involuntary? Or, are they voluntary? If Mr. Hill says, They are involuntary? I answer, Then they are not proper breaches

breaches; because hat law curfes us for no involuntary offences; therefore, fuch offences [like St. Paul's reproving of the high Priest more sharply than he would have done, had he known what high dignity his unjust judge was invested with] such offences, I say, are not fins according to the royal and evangelical law of our Melebijedec; and therefore they do not prove, that ALL believers remain full of indvelling fin till death.—If Mr. Hill replies that "The many offences, of which St. James speaks, are voluntary offences, and therefore real breaches of the law of liberty; I answer, that this genuine sense of the words taken in connexion with the context, confirms our doctrine of christian perfection and our opposition to antinomianism; and I

prove it thus:

The text and context run thus: My brethren, be not many mafters; [i. e. lord it not one over another;] knowing that WE [who do fo] Shall receive the greater condemnation [or damnation] if we do not learn humility. I fay we, because I would not have you think that God our judge is a respecter of persons, and will spare an apostle, who breaks the law of liberty and does not repent, any more than he would spare you. For if I represented God as a partial judge, Juda's greater condem-nation would prove me mistaken. And I insist the more upon this awful doctrine, because in many things we offend all, especially in word, till we are made perfect in love, in that love which is the fulfilling of the law, and enables us to keep our tangue as it were with a bridle all the day long .- If Mr. Hill asks, by what means I can show, that this is really St James's meaning: I reply: By the plain rule of divinity and criticism, which bids us take the beginning of a verse in connexion with the end. And if we do this here, we find the doctrine of christian perfection in this very text, thus: We shall receive the greater damnation if we do not repent and cease to be many masters: For in many things

our words till we are perfected in love.] If any man offend not in word, the same is [what each of us should be] A PERFECT MAN, and ABLE also to bridle his whole body: Jam. iii. 1, 2.—So certain therefore, as there are men ABLE TO BRIDLE their tongue, and THEIR WHOLE BODY, there are men PERFECT IN THE BODY—perfect BEFORE DEATH, according to the doctrine contained in the controverted passage of St. James.

" But St. James fays also, The firit that dwel-

letb in us lufteth to envy, Jam. iv. 5."

I reply: (1) It is usual for modest teachers to rank themselves with the persons, of whom they fay fomething difagreeable: and this they do to take away the harshness of their doctrine, and to make way for the feverity of their charges. Thus Peter writes, The time paft of our life may fuffice us, to have wrought the will of the gentiles, when WE WALKED in LASCIVIOUSNESS, lafts, EXCESS OF WINE, REVELLINGS, BANQUETINGS, and ARO-MINABLE IDOLATRIES! Tho' it is evident that Peter, a poor, industrious, godly jew, never walked in abominable idolatries, working the will of the gentiles. Now the fame delicacy of charity. which made St. Peter rank himself with heathens who walked in drunkenness, whoredom, and gross idolatry, makes St. James rank himself with the carnal christians, who are possessed by an envious spirit.

(2) Nay, St. James himself using the same figure of speech, says, The tongue is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison, &c. therewith curse we men, who are made after the similitude of God. But would it be reasonable to inser from these words, that his tongue was still full of deadly poison, and that he therewith continued to curse his neighbour? Therefore all that is implied in his words about every, is, that, till we are made perfect in the charity which envieth not, and is not pussed up, the spirit that is in us suffeth to envy and pride. And that we, who

have not yet attained christian perfection, need not be always envious and proud, is evident from the VERY NEXT words, But be giveth more grace, wherefore he fays, God refifteth the proud [envious man] but giveth grace unto the bumble :- Refift the devil and be will fire from you :- purify your hearts, YE DOUBLE MINDED: Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to beavines: So severe was St. James to those adulterers and adulteresses, those genteel believers, who stopped thort of christian perfection, loved the world, and envied one another! Therefore, to press him into the fervice of folifidianism, is as rash an attempt, as. to call his epiffle on Epiffle of frace, worthy of being committed to the flames: And (if the preceding remarks are just) Mr. Hill is as much mistaken, when he appeals to St. James, as when he quotes St. Peter, in defence of christian imperfection.

SECTION VI.

St. Paul preached christian perfection, and professed to bave attained it .- A view of the different forts of perfection which belong to the different difpensations. of grace and glory.—How St. Paul could profess a christian perfection of faith and love, and yet affert that he had not yet attained his perfection of fufferings; much less bis perfection of knowledge and glory. -The body child JESUS'S imperfection in knowledge and sufferings, and his growing in wisdom, in stature, and in favour with God and man, were entirely confiftent with his perfection of bumble love.

CT. Paul's name appears upon Mr. Hill's lift of witnesses against christian perfection; but it is without the apostle's consent; for Peter and James did not plead more strenuously for the glorious Aberty of God's children than St. Paul.

Nay

Nay he professed to have attained it, and addressed fed Fathers in Christ as persons that were partakers of it together with himself. We seek wisken, says he, among THEM THAT ARE PERFECT, I Cor. ii. 6.—Let us, as many as be perfect be thus

minded. Phil. iii. 15.

Nor did Paul fancy that christian perfection was to be confined to the apostolic order; for he wanted all believers to be like him in this respect. Hence it is, that he exhorted the CORINTHIANS to perfect holiness in the fear of God, 2 Cor. vii. 1. to be perfed, 2 Cor. xiii. 11. to be perfedly jo together in the same mind, I Cor. i. 10; and shewe them the perfect, or more excellent ever, I Cor. xiii. -He told the EPHESIANS, that God gove peffers for the PERFECTING of the faints,—till all con the unity of the faith, -unto a PERFECT man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ; Eph. iv. 12. 13.-He taught every man &c. that be might present every man PERFECT in Christ Jesus. Col. i. 28.—He wanted the Colossians fully to put on charity, which is the bond of PERFECTION—that they might fland PERFECT and COMPLETE in all the wil of God, Col. iii. 14. iv. 12. He would have the man of God to BE PERFECT, theroughly furnified a every good work. 2 Tim. iii. 17.—He excited his converts whether they did eat, drink, or do any thing elje, to do all to the glory of God, and in the name of th Lord Tefus; rejoicing evermore, praying without ceafin and in every thing giving thanks & That is, he excited them to walk according to the firstest rules of christian perfection.-He blamed the HEBREWS for being still fuch as bave need of milk, and not of strong meat; observing that firong meat, som Teasier, belongeth to them that ARE PERFECT, even to them who by reason of use [or experience] have their [spiritual] fenfes exercised to discern both good and evil; Heb. v. 12, &c. He begins the next chapter by exhorting them to go on unto PERFECTION; inti-mating, that, if they do not, they may infenfibly fall away, put the Son of God to open Shame, and not be

renewed again to repentance. And he concludes the whole epiftle by a pathetic wish, that the God of peace would MAKE them PERFECT in every good work, to do his will. Hence it appears, that it would not be less unreasonable to set St. Paul upon crucifying Christ asresh, than to make him attack. Christ's well-known doctrine, Be ye [morally] PERFECT [according to your narrow capacity and bounded power] even as your heavenly Father is [morally] perfect [in his infinite nature, and boundless godhead.] Mat. v. 48.

Mr. Hill will probably attempt to set all these scriptures aside, by saying, that nothing can be more absurd, than to represent Paul as a perfectionist, because he says himself, Not as though I had already attained, or WERE ALREADY PERFECT. Phil: iii. 12. But, some remarks upon the different sorts of perfection, and upon the peculiar perfection, which the apostle said he had not yet attained,

will eafily folve this difficulty.

Mr. Hill is too well acquainted with divinity, not to know that absolute perfection belongs to God. alone, and that Christ himself, with respect to his: humanity, fell and still falls short of infinite perfection. Omniscience, and a wisdom admitting of no growth. are effential to absolute perfection: but the MAN. Christ was not omniscient; for he did not know the: day of judgment: Nor was his wisdom infinite, for be grew in wisdom. Nay, his happiness is not yet absolute; for it daily encreases as he sees bis feed, and is more and more fatisfied. God alone is supremely perfect: All beings are imperfect, when they are compared to him: And tho' all his works were: perfect in their places, yet, as he gave them different. degrees of perfection, they which have inferior degrees. of goodness, may be faid to be imperfed in comparifen of them, which are endued with superior degrees of excellence. Thus archangels are perfect as archangels; but imperfect in comparison of Jesus. Choff. Angels are perfect as angels, but imperfect in comparison of archangels. Enoch, Elijah, and tha-

the faints who arose with our Lord, are perfest as glorified faints; and, in comparison of them, the departed spirits of just men made perfect continue in a state of imperfection: For the rifen faints are glorified in body and foul, but the mouldered bodies of departed faints, not having yet felt the power of Christ's resurrection, are still under the power of corruption. Imperfect as St. Paul and St. John are now, in comparison of Enoch, Elijah, and the twenty-four elders fo often mentioned by St. John; yet they are far more perfect than when they were pressed down by a corruptible body, under which they groaned being burdened: For the disembodied spirits of just men made perfect are more perfect than the most perfect christians, who are yet in a body dead because of fin .- And, as among rich men, some are richer than others; or, as among tall men fome are taller than others; fo among perfed christians fome are more perfect than others.

According to the gradation, which belongs to all the works of God; and according to the doctrine of the dispensations of divine grace; the least perfect of all perfect christians, is more perfect than the most perfect jew; yea, than John the Baptist, whose dispensation linked together Judaism and Christianity. Or, to speak the language of our Lord, He that is least in the [christian] kingdom of God, is greater than John; the John himself was the greatest born of a woman under any preceding dispensation.—By the same rule, he that is perfect under the jewish dispensation, is more perfect than he that is only perfect according to the dispensation

of the gentiles.

The standard of these different persections is fixed in the scriptures. To fear God and work righteensmess, i. e. to do to others as we would be done by, from the principle of God's fear, is the standard of a GENTILE's persection. The standard of a JEW's persection with respect to morality may be seen in Deut. xxvii. 14—26, and in Ps. xv. And, with respect to devotion, it is fixed in Ps. 119.

The whole of this perfection is thus furnmed up by Micah: O Israel, what does the Lord thy God require of three, but to do justice, to love mercy, and to walk

bumbly with thy God.

The perfection of INFANT-CHRISTIANITY, which is called in the scriptures, the Baptism of John, is thus described by John and by Christ:—
He that bath two coats, let him impart to him that bath none, &c. If thou wilt be perfect, sell what thou hast, give to the toor, and follow me.—If any man come to me and hate not [i. e. is not willing for my fake to leave] his father and mother, his wife and children, his brothers and sisters, yea and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. And who sever does not bear his eross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple.

With respect to ADULT, PERFECT CHRISTI-ANITY, which is consequent upon the baptism of the Holy Ghost administred by Christ himself, it's perfection is described in the termon upon the mount, in I Cor. xiii. and in all those parts of the Epistles, where the apostles exhort believers to walk agreeably to the glorious liberty of God's

children.

The perfection of DISEMBODIED SPIRITS is thus described by a voice from beaven: - Bleffed are the dead who die in the Lord: Even fo, faith the Spirit, for they REST FROM THEIR LABOURS, [not from their SINS; this they did BEFORE death:] and their works follow them. - And the complete perfection of GLORIFIED SAINTS is thus described by St. John and St. Paul .- They shall live and reign with Christ in a city wherein there is no temple, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it, and the city bath no need of the sun to Shine in it, for the glory of God enlightens it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.—And there shall be no curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb Shall be in it, and bis fervants shall ferve bim, and they shall fee bis face; and his name shall be on their forebeads—and they shall reign for ever and ever in glorified bodies .- For this corruptible body shall put on incorruption, and this mortal

mortal shall put on immortality.—It is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body: As is the heavenly Adam, such are they also that are heavenly: And as we have born the image of the earthy we shall also hear the image of the heavenly: for sless and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God: but the spiritual, i. e. the glorified body shall inherit the heavenly Canaan.

Persons, whose orthodoxy consists in obstinately resusing to peep over the wall of prejudice; and who think it is a crime to read the scriptures without borrowing green spectacles, will probably say, that these observations upon the different sorts and degrees of persection, are "novel chimeras;" and that I multiply persections as I do justifications; "inventing them by the dozen." To this I answer, that we advance nothing but what, we hope, recommends itself to the candor of those who have

a regard for reason and revelation.

(1) REASON tells us, that all God's works are perfect in their places; and that some having an bigber place than others upon the fcale of beings, they are of consequence more perfect. If Mr. Hill will not believe it, we appeal to his BANGER, and we ask, if there is not an effential differ between the metalic perfection of brass, that of st ver, and that of gold? -We appeal to his JEWEL-LER, and ask if the perfection of an agate is not inferior to that of an emerald—the perfection of a ruby, to that of a diamond; and if some diamonds cannot be faid to be more perfect than others?—We appeal to his GARDENER, and ask if a black-berry, is not inferior to a firage-berry, a strawberry to a nectarine, and a nectarine to a pine-apple; and if nevertheless those various fruits have not each their perfection?-Nay, we will venture to ask his undergardener, if the perfection of the fruit does not imply the perfection of the bloffom; if the perfection of the bloffom does not pre-suppose that of the bud ;

bad; and if a bud, whose perfection is destroyed by the frost in March, is likely to produce perfect blossoms in May, and perfect fruit in October?

Should the fear of becoming a perfectionist, make Mr. Hill refuse his affent to these obvious truths: we will address him as a master of arts, a gentleman, who is verfed in natural philosophy, as well as in calvinism. Is it absurd to fay, that some just men rife progreisively from the perfection of a lower, to the perfection of an higher dispensation in the spiritual world; Do we not fee a fimilar promotion, even among the basest classes of animals in the natural world? Consider that beautiful insect, which exults to display its crown, and to expand its wings in the fun. Will you fay that it is not a perfect butterfly? Nevertheless three weeks ago it was a perfect ourclia, quietly fleeping in its filken tomb. Some months before, it was a perfect filk-worm, bufily preparing itself for another state of existence, by fpinning and weaving its shroud. And had you feen it a year ago, you would have feen nothing but a PERFECT egg. Thus in one year it has expebut a PERFECT egg. rienced three grand changes, which may be called metamorphofes, births, or conversions. Each change was perfect in its kind; and nevertheless, the last is as far fuperior to the first, as a beautiful, slying butterfly exceeds a black, crawling worm; and fuch a worm, the invisible feed of life, that lies dormant in the diminutive egg of an infect.

(2) SCRIPTURE and EXPERIENCE do not support our doctrine of the difference of perfections, less than Reason and philosophy. We read, Gen vi. 9. that Noah was a just man, and PERFECT in his generation. We read also, Job i. 1, that There was a man in the Land of Uz, subose name was Job, and that man was PERFECT. Now whatever the persection of Noah and Job consisted in, it is evident that it was not jewish persection: For the perfection of judaism requires the sacrament of circumcision, and Mr. Hill will hardly say, that mean

men were circumcifed in the land of Uz, and before the flood. Hence I conclude that Noah and Job had attained the perfection of gentilism, and

not that of judaism.

Again: Mark the PERFECT man, fays David, for his end is peace. No doubt he spake this of the persect jew; and such were, I think, Mojes, Samuel, and Daniel: If Mr. Hill will not allow it, I produce Simeon and Anna, or Zacharias and Elizabeth, who were both righteous before God walking in All the commandments and ordinances of God BLAMELESS, Luke i. 16. Now these excellent jews were not persect according to the dispensation of John the Baptist; for water-baptism was not less essential to a persect disciple of John, than circumcisson was to a persect disciple of Moses, and they, or some of them, probably died long before John opened his dispensation by preaching the baptism of repentance.

Once more: John the baptift was undoubtedly perfect according to his own dispensation; his penitential feverity, his great reputation for holinefs. and the high encomium which our Lord paffed upon him, naturally lead us to conclude it. But that he was not a perfect christian is evident from the following confiderations: (1) Our Lord faid, that the least in the [christian] kingdom of God, should be GREATER than John.—(2) John himself confessed the impersection of his baptism, or dispenfation, in comparison of the perfection of Christ's baptism and spiritual dispensation. I bave need to be baptized of THEE, faid he to Christ, and comest thou to me ! And to his disciples he said, I indeed baptize you with water, but he [the Lamb of God] Shall baptize you with the Holy Ghoft and with fire. (3) John was beheaded before Christ was crucified; and the outpouring of the spirit, the baptism of the Holy Ghost, did not begin till after Christ's ascension: the apostle St. John having particularly mentioned, that the Holy Ghost was not yet given, or that the full dispensation of the Spirit was not yet

open'd, because Jesus was not yet glorified, John vii. 30: An important observation this, which is confirmed by Christ's own words to his disciples, John xvi. 7. I tell you the truth; it is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away the comforter will not come unto you; [the full difpensation of the Holy Ghost shall not be opened:] but if I depart, I will fend bim to you. Agreeably to this, be combut wait for the promise of the Father [i. e. the promised spirit] which, says be, Ye have beard of me: for John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghoft not many days bence .-And when they had been thus baptized, they began to preach the FULL BAPTISM of Christ, which has two branches, the baptism of coater, and the baptism of the Spirit, or of celestial fire. Therefore, when the penitent jews asked, Men and bretbren what shall we do? Peter answered, Be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, and ye Shall rereive the gift of the Holy Ghoft; for the promife of it is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off; even as many as the Lord our God shall call to the perfection of the christian dispensation :-And we are witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghoft, whom God [fince the day of pentecost] bath given to them that obey him, i. e. to obedient believers. Compare Acts ii. 38, and v. 32. with John vii. 39.

From the preceding reasons we conclude, that the case of John the Baptist was as singular as that of Moses. Moses knew Joshua, and pointed him out, as the man who was to lead the Israelites into the land of promise: But Moses died before Joshua opened the way. Thus Moses saw the good land: he was not far from the typical kingdom of God; but be did not enter into it. In like manner the Baptist knew Christ, and pointed him out as the wonderful person, who was to introduce believers into the spiritual kingdom of God. But John was beheaded

beheaded before Christ glorified opened his peculiar Thus John faw the kingdom of heaven: be was not far from it : But yet be did not enter into it. He died a just man made perfect according to bis own incomplete dispensation, but not according to the dispensation of Christ and his Spirit. This was the Baptist's grief, not his guilt: for he earnestly defired to be baptized of Christ with the Holy Ghoft; but the Holy Ghoft was not yet given in the christian measure. The gift of the spirit was rather diffill'd as a dew, than poured out as a shower; BECAUSE Jesus was not yet glorified: But now, that he is afcended up on high to receive that unspeakable gift for men in it's fulnels ; - now that the promise of the Father is fulfill'd to all who plead it aright; we are culpable, if we rest satisfied with the inserior manifestations of the Spirit, which belong to the baptism of John, or to infant-christianity; and we act in an unchristianlike manner, if we ridicule the kingdom of the Holy Ghoft, and speak evil of perfect christianity.

To return: A perfect GENTILE fees God in his works and providences; but, wanting a more particular manifestation of his existence and goodness, he fighs, Oh where shall I find bim? - A perfed Jew ardently expects his coming as Meffab, and Emmanuel, or God with us; and he groans, O that thou wouldst rend the beavens, and come down! A perfect DISCIPLE OF JOHN believes, that the Melfiah is come in the flesh, and prays, O Lamb of God, that takest away the fins of the world, restore the kingdom to a waiting Ifraelite : Baptize me with the Hely Gooft : Fill me with the Spirit .- And perfect CHRISTIANS can witness from bleffed experience, that he, who was manifest in the sless, is come in the fpirit's power to establish within them his gracious kingdom of righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghoft.

In this bleffed kingdom St. Paul lived, when he faid, Let us, as many as are PERFECT be thus minded. Nevertheless, tho' he was not only a perfect christian, but able also to preach wisdom among them that

owere PERFECT, he justly acknowledges himself imperfect in knowledge in comparison of perfectlyglorified faints. We know but in part, fays he, but when that which is PERFECT is come, then that which is in part shall be done away: For now we fee thro' a glass darkly, but when we shall drop these dark veils of flesh and blood, and be clothed with celestial, incorruptible bodies, we shall be capable of beholding God without dying; and then we shall see bim face to face. I Cor. xiii. 9, &c. For the' eve are now the sons of God, it does not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like bim, for we shall see bim as be is.

7 John, iii. 2.

It is of this FINAL PERFECTING of the faints in the day of the refurrection, that the apostle writes to the Hebrews, where he fays: Theje all baving obtained a good report thro' faith, received not the promise which relates to the FULL persection of the just; God baving provided some better thing for us [christians,] that they [the jewish saints] without us should not be MADE PERFECT, [i. e. that we should all be perfected in glory together]-For we shall all be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump, [for the trumpet shall found, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible] and ewe, who shall have died, or shall then be found living in a state of initial perfection, shall be changed. Heb. xi, 39. 1 Cor. xv, 51.

Nor does it follow from thence, that all glorified faints shall be EQUALLY perfect. I cannot but embrace here the reasonable sentiment of Dr. Watts. 'The worship of heaven [Jays that judicious divine] and the joy that attends it, may be exceedingly different IN DEGREES, according to

- the different capacity of spirits; and yet ALL may be PERFECT, and free from SINFUL defects,
- Does not the Sparrow praise its Maker upon the ridge or a cottage, chirping in its native per-
- fection? And yet the Lark advances, in her

· fight and fong, as far above the sparrow, as the clouds

clouds are above the house-top. Surely superior joys and glories must belong to superior powers and fervices. — The word perfection does not always imply equality. If all the fouls in heaven were of one mould, and make, and inclination; yet there may be different fizes of capacity even in the fame genus, and a different degree of preparation for the fame delights: therefore tho' all the spirits of the just were uniform in their natures and pleasures, and all perfect; yet one spirit may possess more happi-ness and glory than another, because it is more capacious of intellectual bleffings and better prepared for them. So when veffels of various fize are thrown into the same Ocean, there will be a great difference in the quantity of the liquid which they receive; tho' all might be full to the brim, and all made of the richest metal." Watts On the Happiness of Separate Spirits.

Having thus proved both by reason and scripture, that there are various forts and degrees of perfection: and that a man may be perfect according to the dispensation of divine grace he is under upon earth, tho' he is not yet perfect according to the dispensation of divine glory, which will take place, when our mortal bodies shall know the power of Christ's refurrection: - Having proved this, I fay, nothing is easier than to reconcile St. Pan' with himself, when he speaks in the same chapter of his being perfect, and of his not being yet perfect. For when he fays, Let us, as many as are PERFECT, be thus minded, he speaks of CHRISTIAN PERFEC-TION, that is, of the maturity of grace and holinefs, which men still burdened with corruptible flesh and blood arrive at under the full dispensation of the gospel of Christ. But when he says, Not as though I had already attained, or were already PER-FECT, &c. he speaks of his perfection as a candidate for a crown of martyrdom on earth, and for a crown of glory in heaven. Just as if he had faid, Tho' I am dead to fin, and perfected in love :tho' I live not, but Christ liveth in me; Yet I am G 2

not satisfied with my present perfection: I want to be perfected like Christ. Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and [then] to enter into his glory? Luke xxiv. 26. I want, in short, to be perfected in sufferings, as well as in love. I cannot, I will not rest, till I end my race of pain and shame, and know the fellowship of Christ's sufferings on the ignominious tree. I am filled with a noble ambition of dying a martyr for him; being persuaded that this perfection of sufferings will ripen me for my heavenly perfection—the perfection to which I shall be raised at the resur-

rection of the just.

That this was the apostle's meaning when he denied his being already made perfect, will, I hope, appear indubitable to those who consider the context. The words which immediately precede St. Paul's observation, that be bad not yet attained, express a pathetic wish of sharing both in Christ's exaltation, by a glorious refurrection, and in his bumiliation by perfect fufferings. That I may know bim [fays he] and the power of his RESURRECTION, and the fellowship of his sufferings; being made conformable unto bis painful, ignominious death, if by any means I may attain to the resurrection of the dead, which is the full perfection of the human nature; and secure a part in the first resurrection of the just, in which martyrs will be peculiarly interested: witness this plain scripture: I faw the fouls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, &c. and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years; But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. THIS is the FIRST refurrection. Bleffed and boly is he that has part in the FIRST resurrection. Rev. xx. 4, &c.

But, I repeat it, altho' St. Paul disclaimed his having yet attained a perfection of shame and glory, he nevertheless professed his having attained a perfection of christian saith working by love. This is evident from the words that sollow the contro-

verted text : This one thing I do; &c. I press towards the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus [which is my complete glorification in beaven. Let us therefore as many as ARE PERFECT. [in faith and love] be thus minded.—Let us press after our perfection of fufferings HERE, and of glory HEREAFTER :- a BODILY perfection this, which the apostle describes thus at the end of the chapter: We look for the Saviour, the Lord Jejus Chrift, who shall change our wile BODY, that it may be fashioned like unto bis GLORIOUS body, according to the working, whereby he is able to subdue all things unto Phil. iii. 21. Hence it appears, if we are not strangely mistaken, that it is not less absurd to oppose our doctrine of christian perfection from. Phil. iii; than to oppose the divinity of Christ from the first chapter of St. John's gospel.

I shall conclude these remarks upon the various forts of persection, by an observation, which may help Mr. Hill to understand how St. Paul could be BERFECT in love, when he professed that he was NOT PERFECT either in glory, knowledge, or sufferings.

Had not our Lord been perfed IN LOVE from a child, he would have broken the two great commandments on which hang all the law and the prophets. But in him was NO SIN: therefore he was perfect in love, tho' his love admitted of an increase, as well as his wisdom and knowledge; just as a. perfect bud admits of a growth into a perfect bloffom, and, fach a bloffom into a perfect fruit. Hence is it, that, as our Lord's perfect love grew, be INCREASED in favour with God and man; an additional degree of approbation being due to him: from all rationals, upon every display of his growing perfection. Luke is 52. But, tho' our Lord. was always perfect in-love, yet, it is certain that he was not always perfect in sufferings, much less in glory: For he was not perfected in sufferings, till! after he had expired between the two thieves: Non was he perfected in glory, before he took his place

place at the right hand of God. This is evidently the apostle's doctrine, where he says, It became bim by whom are all things, to make the captain of our falvation PERFECT THRO' SUFFERINGS, Heb. ii. 10. And again, Chap. v. 8. The' be was a Son, yet learned be obedience by the things aubich be SUFFERED: And BEING MADE PERFECT (in fufferings and in glory] be became the author of cternal salvation to all them that obey him. Mr. Hill must then allow, that St, PAUL's imperfection with respect to sufferings and GLORY, was no obstacle to the perfection of his LOVE; or he must affert, that CHRIST was SINFULLY imperfect in LOVE, fo long as he continued imperfect in sufferings and GLORY: A fuppolition this, which is too horrible to be admitted by a merely nominal christian, much more by Mr. Hill. node of the street street street as about

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inch by deeper ich, by an object of the voice and the

St. PAUL was not luftful, carnal, and fold under fin.

—The true meaning of Gal. v. 17, and of Rom.

vii. 14, &c. is opened confifently with the context, the defign of the Epifles to the Galatians and to the Romans, the priviledges of the christians, and the doctrine of perfection.

IT is easier to raise dust than to answer an argument. I expect therefore, that our opponents, instead of solidly answering the contents of the preceding section, will affert that St. Paul was an avowed enemy to deliverance from lust and evil tempers before death, and of consequence a strong opposer of the doctrine of christian perfection. And to support their affertion they will probably quote the following text: The slesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the slesh, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. Gal. v. 17.

For they conclude from these words, that, so long as we dwell in bodies of corruptible selb, we CANNOT help breaking the law of liberty (at least from time to time) by SINFUL internal lusts. As this objection passes among them for unanswerable, it may not be amis to give it a four-fold answer.

(1) St. Paul wrote these words to the CARNAL, FALLEN Galatians. To THEM he faid, So that YE cannot do the things that ye would: And there was a good reason, why they could not do what they had a weak defire to do. They were beswitched by the flesh, and by carnal teachers, who led them from the power of the spirit to the weakness of the letter; yea, to the letter of judaism too. But did he not fpeak of himfelf to the Phillipians in a very different strain? Did he not declare, I can DO ALL THINGS thro' Christ, who strengtheneth me? And cannot every believer who steadily evalks in the Spirit fay the same thing? Who does not see the slaw of this argument? The disabedient, fallen, bewitched believers of Galatia of whom St. Paul food in doubt, could not but fulfil the lufts of the flesh, when they were led by the flesh. Neither bet nor cold, like the Laodiceans, they could neither be perfect christians not perfect worldlings, because they fully sided neither with the Spirit nor with the flesh: or to use the aposlle's words, They could NOT Do the things that they would thro' the opposition which the flesh made against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh; neither of these principles being yet fully victorious. in their halting, distracted hearts. this must be also the miserable case of all obedient, faithful, established believers thro' all ages all the world over! What has this antinomian conclufion to do with the feriptural premises? When I affert that all those who have put out their knees CANNOT run a race swiftly, do I so much as intimate that NO MAN can be a fwift racer?

(2) It is as unfcriptural to judge of the power and liberty of established believers, by the power and liberty

liberty of the Galatians; as it is unreasonable to judge of the liberty of a free nation, by the fervitude of an half-enflaved people; or of the strength of a vigorous child, by the weakness of an halfformed embrio. I found this remark (1) Upon Gal. v. 1, where the apostle indirectly reproves his judaizing, wrangling converts, for being fallen. from the liberty wherew th Christ hath made us free; and for being entangled again with the yoke of bondage: And (2) Upon Gal. iv. 19, My little children, of whom I travel in birth AGAIN, UNTIL. CHRIST BE FORMED IN YOU. The dawn of day is not more different from the meridian light, than the imperfed state described in this verse, is different from the perfect flate described in the following lines, which are descriptive of the adult christian = I am crucified with Christ: Nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me, and the life which I NOW live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of. God. Gal. n. 20.

(3) The fense which is commonly fixed upon the text produced by our opponents, is entirely overturned by the context: Read the preceding verse, and you will find a glorious, tho' conditional promise of the liberty which we plead for: This k say, walk in the Spirit, and ye SHALL NOT fulfil the [finful] lust of the sless; that is, Far from harboring either outward or inward fin, ye shall, with myself and as many as are perfect, sleadily keep your body under, and be in every thing spiritually minded.

which is life and peace.

(4) We should properly distinguish between the lawful and the sinful lusts or desires of the slesh. To desire to eat, to drink, to sleep, to marry, to rest, to shun pain at proper times and in a proper manner, is no sin: Such lusts or desires are not contrary to the law of liberty. Our Lord himself properly indulged most of these harmless propensities of the slesh, without ceasing to be the immanulate Lamb of God. Hence it is, that our Church requires us in our baptism, to renounce only

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the SINFUL lufts of the flesh;" giving us a tacie leave lawfully to indulge its lawful appetites. I should be glad, for example, to recruit my strength by one hour's fleep, or by an ounce of food; as well as by a good night's rest, or a good meal; but the flesh harmlefly lustetb against the spirit; so that in these, and in a thousand such instances, I cannot do the things that I would. But do I commit fin when I use my body according to its nature? Nay, if I were as strongly solicited unlawfully to indulge the lawful appetites of my flesh, as Christ was to turn stones into bread when he felt keen hunger in the wilderness; and if I as strongly refifted the temptation; would not fuch a temptation increase the glory of my victory, rather than the number of my fins? Is it right in our opponents to avail themselves of the vague, unfixed meaning of the words flesh, and lust, to make the fimple believe, that, so long as we have human flesh about us, and BODILY lusts or appetites within us, our hearts must NECESSARILY remain pregnant with SINFUL lufts, and we shall " bave innumerable us lusts (as fays an imperfectionist whom I shall " foon mention) fivarming around our beart?" Does not this doctrine put a worm at the root of christian liberty, while it nourishes antinomian freedom; -a freedom to fin even to adultery and murder, without ceasing to be finless and perfect in Christ?

(5) Two lines after St. Paul's supposed plea for the necessary continuance of indwelling sin in believers, the apostle begins a long enumeration of the works of the stell, of the which, says he, I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they [the fallen believers] who do such things, or admit in their hearts such lusts as hatred, variance, strife, or envyings, shall not inherit the kingdom of God; Whereas they that are Christ's [they that are led by the Spirit of God, for in Paul's account only such are Christ's, i. e. properly belong to Christ's spiritual dispensation, See Rom. viii. 9.

14,] bave crucified the flesh with it's affections and lusts, Gal. v. 24. Now these spiritual believer can do all things thro' Christ: and accordingly the apostle observes that far from bearing the fruit of the slesh, they bear the fruit of the spirit, which is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, temperance—The whole cluster of inherent graces which makes up christian perfection: And then he observes, that The law is not against such [because they suffit it:] For ALL THE LAW IS FULFILLED in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as

thyfelf. See Gal. v. 14-23.

(6) The fense which the impersectionists give to Gal. v. 17. is not only flatly contrary to the rest of the chapter, but to the end and design of all the epiftle. What the Apostle has chiefly in view thro' the whole is to reprove the Galatians for their carnality in following judaizing teachers, and in bearing the fruits of the flesh, envy, variance, &c. infomuch that they were ready to bite and devour one another. Now, if when he had sharply reproved them, as persons who ended in the flesh, after having begun in the spirit, he had written Gal. v. 17. in the sense of our opponents; he would fairly have excused these bewitched men, absolutely defeated his reproof, and absurdly furnished them with an excellent plea to continue in their bad course of life. For if they could not fulfil the law of Christ, but must remain carnal and fold under indwelling fin, had they not a right to answer the apostle thus: If neither we, whom thou callest bewitched Galatians, nor any spiritual believer can possibly do the things that we should and would do, because the flesh sinfully and unavoidably lusteth against the spirit; why dost thou blame us for our carnality? Why dost thou take us to task rather than other believers? Are we not all bound by adamantine chains of carnal necessity to break the law of Christ so long as we are in the body? Ant thou not the very man who givest us to understand that

that We CANNOT DO WHAT WE should and would do, because the flesh, which we cannot possibly part with, before death, LUSTETH AGAINST THE SPIRIT? And is not absolute necessity the best excuse in the world?

(7) Should Mr. Hill afk: What is then the genuine meaning of Gal, v. 17? we reply, that when we confider that verse in the light of the context, we do not doubt but the fense of it is fairly expressed in the following lines. ' The flesh and the spirit are two contrary principles. They that are in, or walk after the flesh cannot please God. And ye are undoubtedly in the flesh, and walk after the flesh, while ye bite and devour one another. 4 This I fay then, walk in the spirit; be led by the first; and ye shall not fulfil the luft of the flesh as ye ' now do. For the flesh lufteth against the spirit, and ' prevails in all carnal people; and the spirit lusteth against the stess, and prevails in all spiritual people; and thefe two, far from nestling together, as antionomian teachers make you believe, are contrary 4 to each other. They are irreconcileable enemies; 4 So that, as obedient, spiritual believers, while they are led by the spirit, CANNOT DO what they would do, if they were led by the flesh; ye bewitched, carnal, disobedient, Galatians who are led by the flesh, CANNOT DO what ye would 4 do, if ye were led by the spirit, and what ye have still some defire to do, so far as ye have not 4 yet absolutely quenched the spirit. Would ye then return to your liberty, return to your duty: 4 Change your guide : Forfake the carnal mind : Let Christ be formed in you: Be led by the spirit: So shall ye fulfil the law of Christ; and it shall no more condemn you, than the law of Mofes binds 4 you. For if ye be led by the spirit, ye are not under the curse of the law: Ye are equally free from the bondage of the Mofaic law, and from the condemnation of the law of Christ.' Gal. v. 16. 17, 18. (8) Should

(8) Should Mr. Hill fay, "That by the flesh he understands not only the body, but also the natural desires, appetites, and aversions, which are necessarily excited in the soul, in consequence of it's intimate union with the body: And that the body of sin must needs live and die with the body which our spirit inhabits; because so long as we continue in the body, we are unavoidably tried by a variety of situations, passions, inclinations, aversions, and infirmities, which burden us, hinder us from doing and suffering all we could wish to do and to suffer, and occasion our doing or feeling what we should be glad in some respects not to do or feel:"

I answer: It is excessively wrong to conclude, that all these burdens, infirmities, appetites, pasfions and averhous, are those finful workings of our corrupt nature, which are fometimes called the flesh. -You cannot continue a whole day in deep proftration of body and foul, nor perhaps one hour upon your knees: Your stomach involuntarily rifes at the fight of some food which some persons esteem delicious: Your strength fails in outward works: Your spirits are exhausted; You faint or fleep, when others are active and toil: You need the spiritual and bodily cordials which others can administer: Perhaps also you are afflicted with difagreeable fensations in the outward man, thro' the natural, necessary play of the various fprings which belong to flesh and blood : Your just grief vents itself in tears: Your zeal for God is attended with a proper anger at fin : Nay, misapplying what the apolite fays of the carnal man under the law, you may declare with great truth: The extenfive good I would, I do not; and the accidental evil I would not, that I do: I would convert every finner, relieve every distressed object, and daily visit every fick bed in the kingdom, but I cannot do it. I would never try the patience of my friends, never stir up the envy of my rivals, never excite the malice

malice of my enemies: but I cannot help doing to undefigned evil, as often as I frongly exert myfelf

in the discharge of my duty.

If you fay, " All these things, or most of them are quite inconfistent with the perfection you contend for;" I alk: Upon this footing, was not our Lord himself impersect? Did his bodily strength never fail in agonizing prayer, or in intenfe labour? Did his animal spirits ever move with the same (prightliness? Do we not read of his sleeping in the ship, when his disciples wrestled with a tempestuous fea? Did he not fulfil the precept, Be ye angry and fin not? Had he not the troubletome fe fations of grief at Lazarus's grave, of bunger in in the wilderness-of cocariness at Jacob's welland of sbirft upon the cross? If he was made in the likeness of finful flest, and tempted in all things as we are; is it not highly probable, that he was not an utter stranger to the other natural appetites, and uneafy fenfations which are incident to flesh and blood? Is it a fin to feel them? Is it not rather a virtue totally to deny them, or not to gratify them out of the line of duty, or not to indulge them in an excessive manner on that line? Again: Did not his holy flesh testify a natural, innocent abhorrence to fuffering? Did not his facred body faint in the garden? Were not his spirits so depressed, that he stood in need of the strengthening affishance of an angel? Did he do all the good he would? To fuppole that he wished not the conversion of bis fi and bretbren, is to suppose him totally devoid of natural affection: but were they all converted? Did vou never read. Neither did HIS BRETHREN believe in him: And HIS FRIENDS went out to lay bold on him: for they faid, be is befide himself? To conclude: Did he not accidentally fir up the evil he would not, when he gave occasion to the eavy of the pharifees the form of Hered the fears of Pilate—the rage of the jewish mob? And when he pray'd, that the bitter cup might pass from bim, if it overe possible; did he not manifest a refigned defire

to escape pain and shame? If every such defire is indwelling fin, or the flesh SINFULLY lusting against the firit, did he not go thro' the SINFUL conflict, as well as those whom we call perfect men in Christ? And confequently did he not fall at once from mediatorial, Adamic, and christian perfection; indwelling fin being equally inconfistent with all these persections?—What true believer does not shudder at the bare supposition? And if our finless. Lord felt the weakness of the flesh harmlessly lusting against the willingness of the spirit, according to his own doctrine, The Spirit indeed is WILLING but the flesh is WEAK, is it not evident that the conflict we fpeak of (if the spirit maintains its superior, victorious lufting against the flesh, and by that means fleadily keeps the flesh in it's proper place) is it not evident, I say, that this conflict is no more inconfistent with christian perfection, than suffering, agonizing, fainting, crying, and dying, which were the lot of our finless, perfed Saviour to the last?

If I am not greatly mistaken, the preceding remarks prove: (1) That when our opponents pretend to demonstrate the necessary indwelling of fin in all believers from Gal. v. 17, they wretchedly tear that text from the context, to make it speak a language which St. Paul abhors :- (2) That this text, fairly taken together with the context, and the defign of the whole epiftle, is a proof that obedient, spiritual believers CAN DO what the bewitebed Galatians COULD NOT DO; that is, they can crucify the flesh with all its affections and lufts, and walk as perfect christians, who utterly destroy the whole body of fin, and fulfil the law of Christ .-And (3) That to produce Gal. v, against the doctrine of christian perfection, is full as abfurd as to quote the fermon upon the mount in defence of antinomian delufions.—I have dwelt fo long upon this head, because I have before me + An Essay

⁺ The arguments by which the doctrine of the necessary indwelling of fin in all believers till death is supported in that Essay, will be considered in Sect. XIV.

on Galatians v. 17. lately published by an ingenious Divine, who takes it for granted, that the Apostle contends in this verse for the necessary inducting of sin.

Mr. Hill will probably fay, "That he does not rest the doctrine of christian imperfection so much upon the experience of the fallen Galatians, as upon that of St. Paul himself, who, in Rom. vii, frankly acknowledges, that he was still a wretched, carnal man, sold under sin, and serving with the sless of sin. Whence it follows, that it is high presumption in modern believers to aspire at more perfection, and greater freedom from sin upon earth, than had been attained by St. Paul, who was not a whit behind the very chiefest apostles, but laboured more abundantly than they all."—To this common objection I answer:

(1) The perfection we preach, is nothing but perfect repentance, perfect faith, and perfect love, productive of the gracious tempers which St. Paul himself describes, I Cor. xiii. We see those bleffed tempers shining thro' his epistles, discourses, and conduct; and I have proved in the preceding fection, that he himself professed christian perfection. This objection therefore appears to us an angenerous attempt to make St. Paul grofly contradict himself.—For what can be more ungenerous, than to take advantage of a figurative mode of expression, to blait a good man's character, and to traduce him as a flave of his fleshly lusts, a drudge to carnality, a wretch fold under fin? What would Mr. Hill think of me, if, under the plaufible pretence of magnifying God's grace to the chief of finners, and of proving that there is no deliverance from fin in this life, I made the following speech?

The more we grow in grace, the more clearly we see our sins; and the more willingly we acknowledge them to God and men. This is abun-

dantly verified by the confessions that the most

holy men have made of their wickedness. Paul

himself, holy Paul, is not assamed to humble himself for the fins which he committed even after his conversion. I ROBBED other CHURCHES, fays he, taking wages of them to do you fervice.
2 Cor. xi. 8. Hence it appears, that the Apostle A had agreed to ferve some churches for a proper falary: But, being carnal, and fold under fin, he broke his word; he fleec'd, but refused to feed the flocks; and robbing the churches, he went to the Corinthians, perhaps to fee what he could get of them also in the end: for the beart is defperately wicked, and deceitful above all bings. Jeremiah xvii. 9. Nay, partial as he was to those Corinthians, for whom he turned church-robber, he shewed that his love to them. was not finless and free from rage; for once he threaten'd to come to them with a rod; and he gave one of them to Satan for the destruction of With great propriety therefore, did holy Paul fay to the last, I am the chief of finners. And now, when the chief of the apostles. abases himself thus before God, and publicly testifies, both by his words and works, that there is no deliverance from fin, no perfection in this life, who can help being frightened at the pharifaic pride of the men, who dare inculcate the doctrine of finless perfection?

I question if Mr. Hill himself, upon reading this ungenerous and absurd, tho' in one sense, scriptural plea for St. Paul's impersection, would not be as much out of conceit with my sictitious explanation of 2 Cor. xi, as I am with his calvinistic exposition of Rom. vii. Nor do I think it more criminal to represent the apostle as a church-robber, than to traduce him as a wretched, carnal man, solve under sin;—another Abab, that is, A man who did evil in the fight of the Lord, above all that were

before bim.

(2) St. Paul no more professes himself almally a carnal man in Rom. vii, than he professes himself almally a liar in Rom. iii. 7. where he says, But if the truth of God has more abounded thro' MY

DIE, why am' I judged as a finner? - He no more professes himself a man ACTUALLY fold under fin, than St. James and his fellow believers profe themselves a generation of vipers, and adval curfers of men, when the one wrote and the others read, The tongue can no man tame: - It is full of deadly poison: -therewith CURSE WE men. When St. Paul reproves the partiality of some of the Corinthians to this or that preacher, he introduces Apollos and himfelf; tho' it feems that his reproof was chiefly intended for other preachers, who fomented a party-spirit in the corrupted church of Corinth. And then he fays, Thefe things, brethrem, I HAVE IN A FIGURE TRANSFERRED TO MYSELF and to Apollos, for your fakes; that ye might learn IN Us not to think of men above that which is writtens 1 Cor. iv. 6.—By the same figure he says of himfelf, what he might have faid of any other man; or of all mankind: The I fpeak with the tongues of men, and of angels; and have not charity, I am become as founding brafs. Thrice in three verses he fpeaks of his not having charity: and suppose he had done it three hundred times, this would no more have proved that he was really uncharitable, than his faying, Rom. vii, I am fild under fin, proves that he ferved the law of fin with his body, as a flave is forced to ferve the master who bought him.

of rhetoric, which is called Hypotyposis, writers rerelate things past or things to come in the present
tense; that their narration may be more lively,
and may make a stronger impression. Thus Gen.
vi. 17. we read, Bebold, I even I do bring [i. e.
I will bring 120 years hence] a flood upon the earth
to destroy all stess.—Thus also, 2 Sam. xxii. 1, 35,
48. When the Lord HAD DELIVERED David out
of the hand of ALL his enemies, and given him p ace in
all his borders, he spake the words of this song.—He
TEACHETH [i. e. he taught] my hands to war, so
that a bow of steel is [i. e. was] broken by mine arms:

H. 3.—It

It is God that AVENGERH [i.e. that hath avenged] me-and that BRINGETH [i. e. has brought] me forth from mine enemies. A thousand fuch expressions, or this figure continued thro' a thousand verses, would never prove, before unprejudiced persons, that King Saul was alive, and that David was not yet delivered for good out of his bloody hands. Now if St. Paul, by a fimilar figure, which he carries thro' part of a chapter, relates his past experience in the present tense:—If the christian apostle, to humble himself, and to make his description more lively, and the opposition. between the bondage of fin and christian liberty more striking:-If the apostle, I say, with such a defign as this, appears upon the stage of instruction in his old jewish dress, a dress this, in which he could ferve God day and night, and yet, like another Abab, breathe threatnings and flaughter against God's children:—And if in this dress he fays, I am carnal, fold under fin, &c. is it not ridiculous to measure his growth as an apostle of Christ, by the standard of his stature, when he was a jewish bigot, a fiery zealot, full of goodmeanings and bad performances?

(4) To take a scripture out of the context, is often like taking the stone that binds an arch out of its place: You know not what to make of it. Nay, you may put it to an use quite contrary to that for which it was intended. This our opponents do, when they to take Rom. vii. out of it's connexion with Rom. vi, and Rom. viii, as to make it mean the very reverse of what the apostledefigned. St. Paul, in Romans vth and vith, and in the beginning of the viith chapter, describes the glorious liberty of the children of God under the chriftian dispensation. And as a skilful painter puts shades in his pictures to heighten the effect of the lights: fo the judicious apostle introduces in the latter part of Rom. vii, a lively description of the domineering power of fin, and of the intolerable burden of guilt;—a burden this, which he had fo

feverely felt, when the convincing spirit charged an home upon his conscience after he had broken. his good resolutions; but especially during the three days of his blindness and fasting at Damascins. Then he groaned, O wretched man that I am, &c. hanging night and day between despair and hope, between unbelief and faith, between bondage and freedom, till God brought him into christian liberty by the ministry of Ananias:-Of this liberty the apostle gives us a farther and fuller account in Rom. viii. Therefore the defcription of the man, who groans under the galling yoke of fin, is brought in merely by contrast, to fet off the amazing difference there is between the bondage of fin, and the liberty of gospel-holines : just as the generals, who entered Rome in triumph, used to make a show of the prince whom, they had conquered. On fuch occasions the conqueror rode in a triumphal chariot crowned with laurel; while the captive king followed him on foot loaded with chains, and making, next to the conqueror, the most striking part of the show. Now, if in a Roman triumph, some of the spectators had taken the chained king an foot for the victoriaous general in the chariot, because the one immediately followed the other; they would have been guilty of a mistake not unlike that of our opponents, who take the carnal jew, fold under fin, and groaning as he goes along, for the christian believer, who walks in the spirit, exults in the liberty. of God's children, and abways triumphs in Christ.

(5) To see the propriety of the preceding obfervation we need only take notice of the contrariety there is between the EONDAGE of the carnal
penitent described Rom. vii. 14, &c. and the L1BERTY of the spiritual man described in the beginning of that very chapter.—The one says, Who
shall deliver me?—Sin revives:—It works in him all
manner of concupiscence—yea, it works death in him:
—he is carnal—fold under sin—forced by his bad
habits

habits to do what he is ashamed of-and kept from doing what he fees his duty.—In him, that is, in bis flesh dwells no good thing-Sin dwelleth in bim .-How to perform that which is good, be finds not Tho' he has a defire to be better, yet still he down not do good-be does evil-evil is present with bim. His in ward man, his reason and conscience approve, yea delight in God's law, i. e. in that which is right; but still he does it not : his good resolutions are no fooner made than they are broken: For another law in his members wars against the law of bis mind, that is, his carnal appetites oppose the dictates of his conscience, and bring bim into captivity to the law of fin: So that, like a poor chained flave, he has just liberty enough to rattle his chains, and to fay O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death, from this complete affemblage of corruption, mifery, and death! Is it not ridiculous to conclude, that, because this groaning flave has now and then a hope of deliverance, and at times thanks God thro' Jejus Christ for that hope; he is advally a partaker of the liberty, which is thus described in the beginning of the chapter? Ye are become dead to the law [the Mosaic dispensation] that ye should be married to bim, who is raised from the dead, that sinstead of omitting to do good, and do evil | eve should bring forth fruit unto God. For WHEN WE WERE in the Helb [in the state of the carnal man, fold under fin,—A fure proof this that the apostle was no more in that state] the motions of fin, which WERE by the law [abstracted from the gospel-promise] DID work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death. But NOW WE ARE DELIVERED from the [curse of the moral, as well as from the bondage of the Mofaic) law, that being dead wherein WE WERE HELD; that we should serve God IN NEWNESS OF SPIRIT, and NOT IN THE OLDNESS OF THE LETTER, Rom. wi. 4, 5, 6. Immediately after this glorious profession of liberty, the apostle in his own person, by way of contrast, describes to the end of the chapter,

who ferve God IN THE OLDNESS OF THE LETTER: So that nothing can be more unreasonable than to take this description, for a description of the obedience of those, who ferve God IN NEWNESS OF THE SPIRIT. We have therefore in Rom. vii. 4, 5, 6, a strong rampart against the mistake which our opponents build on the rest of the chapter.

(6) This mistake will appear still more astonishing, if we read Ram. vi, where the apostle particularly describes the liberty of those who ferve God EN NEWNESS OF THE SPIRIT, according to the glorious privileges of the new covenant. Is darkness more contrary to light than the preceding description of the CARNAL jew is to the following description of the SPIRITUAL christian. How shall we that are DEAD TO SIN live any longer therein! Our old man is crucified with Christ, that the body of fin might be DESTROYED, that benceforth que fould NOT SERVE SIN. [NOTE: The carnal jew, tho' against his conscience, still " ferves the low of . " fin" Rom. vii. 25.] Now be that is DEAD, is FREED FROM SIN .- Reckon ye your felves also to be DEAD INDEED UNTO SIN .- Tield yourfelves unto . God, As those that are ALIVE FROM THE DEAD Note: The carnal jew fays, " SIN REVIVED " AND I DIED," Rom. vii. 9. but the spiritual christian is ALIVE FROM THE DEAD. -Sin Shall not have dominion over you [now you are spiritual: You need not fay, " I do the evil that I hate, and " the evil I would not, that I do:"] for you are not under the law [under the weak dispensation of the law of Moses;] but under grace, [under the powerful, gracious dispensation of Christ.]-God be thanked, that [whereas] ye WERE the SERVANTS OF SIN [when you carnally ferved God in the oldness of the letter] ye have obeyed from the beart the form of doctrine, which was delivered you: [that is, Ye have heartily embraced the Gospel of Christ, who gives rest to all that come to him travelling and heavy laden.] Being THEN MADE FREE FROM

FROM SIN, YE BECAME the fervants of righteoujnefs-For when ye WERE the servants of fin, ye were free from righteousness .- Bur Now being-carnal, fold under fin, ye ferve the law of fin! No: just the reverse: But now being MADE FREE FROM SIN, and BECOME SERVANTS TO GOD, ye HAVE your fruit UNTO HOLINESS, and the end everlafting life. Rom. vi. 2-22. Is it possible to reconcile this description of christian liberty, with the preceding description of jewish bondage? Can a man at the same time exult in the one, and groan under the other? When our opponents affert it, do they not confound the Mofaic and the Christian dispensation: -the workings of the spirit of bondage, and the workings of the spirit of adoption? And yet, aftonishing! THEY charge us with confounding law

and goffel!

(7) We shall see their mistake in a still more glaring light, if we pass to Rom. viii, and confider the description, which St. Paul continues to give us of the glorious liberty of those, who have done with the oldness of the [jewish] letter, and serve God in newness of the spirit. The poor jew, carnally sticking in the letter, is condemned for all he does, if his conscience is awake. But There is now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jefus [who are come up to the privileges of the christian dispensation] who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus [the power of the quickning spirit given me, and my fellow-believers, under the spiritual and perfect dispensation of Christ Jesus] bath made me free from the law of fin and death. For what the law [the letter of the Mosaic dispensation] could not do in that it was weak thro' the flesh, God sending his own Son, condemned fin in the flesh : that the righteousness of the law [the spiritual obedience, which the moral law of Moses adopted by Christ requires] might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the fleft, but after the spirit. For [to far from profesling that I am "carnal and fold under fin," I declare that]

to be carnally minded is DEATH: [Well may then the carnal jew groan, "Who shall deliver me from the body of this DEATH !"] But to be fpiritually minded is life and peace: So then, they that are in the flesh, [i. e. carnal, fold under fin] cannot please God. But ye are not in the slesh, but in the Spirit, IF SO BE that the SPIRIT of God dwell IN You. Now if any man bave not the spirit of Christ, he is none OF HIS: [he is, at best, a disciple or Moses, a poor, carnal jew; and remains till a stranger to the glorious privileges of the christian dispensation] But if Christ be in you, the body is dead [weak and full of the feeds of death] because of [original] fin; but the spirit is life [strong and full of immortality] because of [implanted and living] righteousness .- For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, [like the poor, carnal man, who thro' fear and anguish groans out, "O wretched man that I am :"] Rut ye have received the fpirit of adoption, whereby we [who walk in newness of the fpirit and please God-we, who have the spirit of Christ] cry Abba, Father: The spirit itself bearing witness with our spirits that we are the children of God: and if children, then beirs; beirs of God [whom we please and joint beirs with Christ, [thro' whom we please God.] Rom. viii. 1-17.

This glorious liberty, which God's children enjoy in their fouls under the perfection of the christian dispensation, will one day extend to their bodies, which are dead fi. e. infirm and condemned to die] because of [original] fin. And with respect to the body only it is, that the apostle fays, Rom. viii. 23, We ourselves also, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, GROAN within ourselves, waiting for the adoption [of our ourwARD man] that is, the redemption of our BODY : For [with respect to the body, whose impersection is so great a clog to the soul] we are faved by hope. [In the mean time] we know that all things work together for good to them that love God .- Who Shall Separate us [that love God, and walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit | from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation or diffress, &c. do of fin, and carnal-mindedness] we are MORE THAN CONQUERORS, thro him that loved us. Rom, viii.

23-37.

And, that this abundant victory extends to the destruction of the CARNAL MIND, we prove by these words of the context, To be CARNALLY MINDED is DEATH; but to be SPIRITUALLY MINDED is LIFE and PEACE; because the CARNAL MIND is ENMITY against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then, they that are IN THE FLESH [they that are CARNALLY MINDED] cannot please God. But YE ARE NOT IN THE FLESH, [ye are NOT CARNALLY MINDED] but IN THE SPIRIT [Ye are SPIRITUALLY MIND-ED :] if fo be that the spirit of God DWELL IN YOU. [For where the spirit of the Lord is, and DWELLS as a spirit of adoption, there is constant liberty; and if any man bath not that spirit, or if he hath it only as a spirit of bondage, to make him groan O suretched man! he may indeed be a fervant of God in the land of his spiritual captivity, but be is none of Christ's free-men: He may serve God in the oldness of the letter, as a jew: but he does not serve him in newness of the spirit, as a christian. For, I repeat it, where the spirit of Christ is, and DWELLS according to the fulness of the christian dispensation, there is liberty, a glorious liberty, which is the very reverse of the bondage, that Mr. Hill pleads for

during the term of life, See Rom. viii. 14—21.

Whether therefore we confider Rom. vii, Rom. vi, or Rom. viii, it appears indubitable, that the fense which our opponents fix upon Rom. vii. 14, &c., is entirely contrary to the apostle's meaning, to the context, and to the design of the whole epistle, which is to extol the privileges of those who are Christ's, above the privileges of those who are Noah's or Moses's; or, if you please, to extol the privileges of spiritual CHRISTIANS who serve God in neumes of the spirit, above the privileges of carnal HEATHENS and JEWS, who serve

him only in the oldness of the letter.

SECTION VIII.

An answer to the arguments, by which St. Paul's supposed carnality is generally defended.

If the fense which our opponents give to Rom. vii. 14, is true, the doctrine of christian perfection is a dream, and our utmost attainment on earth is St. Paul's apostolic carnality, and involuntary servitude to the law of six; with an hopeful prospect of deliverance in a death-purgatory. It is therefore of the utmost importance to establish our exposition of that verse, by answering the arguments, which are supposed to favour the antinomian meaning rashly fixed upon that portion of scripture.

ARGUMENT I. "If St. Paul was not carnel and fold under fin when he wrote to the Romans, why does he say, I am carnel? Could he not have said, I was carnal? Could he not law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set me free from the law of sin and death? Can you give a good reason why, in Rom. vii. 14, the phrase I am carnal, must mean I was carnal? Is it right thus to substitute the past tense for the present?"

Answer. We have already shewn, that this figurative way of speaking is not uncommon in the scriptures. We grant however that we ought not to depart from the literal sense of any phrase, without good reasons. Several such, I trust have already been produced, to show the necessity of taking St. Paul's words, I am carnal, in the sense stated in the preceding section. I shall offer one more Remark upon this head, which, if I mistake not, might alone convince the unprejudiced.

The states of all souls may in general be reduced to three :- (1) That of unawakened finners, who quietly fleep in the chains of their fins, and dream of felf-righteousness and heaven.—(2) That of awakened, uneasy, reluctant finners, who try in vain to break the galling chains of their fins:—And (3) That of delivered finners, or victorious believers, who enjoy the liberty of God's children. This last state is described in Rom. vii. 4, 6. The rest of that chapter is judiciously brought in, to show how the unawaken'd finner is rouzed out of his carnal state, and how the awakened finner is driven to Christ for liberty by the lashing and binding commandment. The apostle shows this by observing [ver. 7, &c.] how the law makes a finner [or, if you please, made him] pass from the unasvakened to the awakened state. I bad not known fin, fays he, but by the law, &c. When he had described his UNAWAKENED fate WITHOUT THE LAW. and began to describe his AWAKENED flate UNDER THE LAW; nothing was more natural than to change the tenfe. But, having already used the PAST tenfe in the description of the first for the unawakened] state; and having faid, Without the law for was dead—I was alive without the law once-Sin REVIVED and I DIED, &c. he could no more use that tense, when he began to describe the second [or the awaken'd] state; I mean the state, in which he found himself, when the commandment had rouzed his fleepy conscience, and slain his pharifaic hopes. He was therefore obliged to use another tense; and none, in that case, was fitter than the present: Just as if he had said: 'When the commandment flew the conceited pharifee in me; -when I died to my felf-righteous hopes; I

did not die without a groan, Nor did I pass into the life of God without severe pangs: No: 1

ftruggled with earnestness, I complained with bitterness, and the language of my oppressed

heart was ; I am carnal, fold under fin.' &c.

to the end of the chapter. It is therefore with the utmost rhetorical propriety, that the apostle says, I AM, and not I was carnal, &c. But rhetorical propriety is not theological exactness. David may say as a poet, God was wroth, There went up a smake out of his nostrils, and fire out of his mouth devoured; coals were kindled by it: But it would be ridiculous to take these expressions in a literal sense. Nor is it much less absurd to affert, that St. Paul's words, I am carnal, sold under fin, are to be understood of christian and apostolic liberty.

ARG. II. "St. Paul fays to the Corinthians, I swrite not to you as to spiritual men, but as to CARNAL, even to BABES IN CHRIST. Now if the Corinthians could be at once boly, and yet carnal; why could not St. Paul be at the same time an eminent, apostolic saint, and a carnal, woretched man, fold under sin?"

Ans. (1) The Corinthians were by no means established believers in general, for the apostle concludes his last epistle to them, by bidding them examine whether they were in the faith.—(2) If St. Paul proved carnal still, and was to continue to till death, with all the body of christian believers;

^{*} Some time after I had written this, looking into Dr. Deddridge's Lectures on divinity, page 451, I was agreeably furprized to find, that what that judicious and moderate Calvinift presents as the most plausible sense of Rom. vii. 14, is exactly the sense which I defend in these pages. Take his own words. "St. Paul FIRST represents a man as ignorant of the law, and then insensible of sin; but AFTERWARDS becoming acquainted with it, and then thrown into a kind of despair, by the sense of death which it denounces, on account of sins he is now conscious of having committed: He then farther shows, that even where there is so good a disposition, as even to delight in the law, yet the motives are too weak to maintain that uniform tenor of obedience, which a good man greatly desires and which the gospel by its superior man tives and grace does in fast produce."

why did he upbraid the Corinthians with their UN-AVOIDABLE carnality? Why did he WONDER at it, and fay, Ye are YET CARNAL; for whereas there is among you enwying and strife, &c. ARE YE NOT CARNAL? Might not these carnal Corinthians have justly replied, CARNAL physician, beal thyself? -(3) In the language of the apostle, to be carnal—to be carnally minded—to walk after the flesh not to walk after the Spirit-and to be in the flesh, are phrases of the same import. This is evident from Rom. vii. 14. viii. 1, to 9: And he says directly, or indirectly, that to those who are in that state, there is condemnation: That they cannot please God, -And that they are in a state of death; because to be carnal, or carnally-minded is death. Rom. viii. 1, 6, 8. Now, if he was carnal himself, does it not follow that he could not please God, and that he was in a state of condemnation and death? But how does this agree with the profession which he immediately makes of being led by the spirit, of walking in the spirit, and of being made free from the law of fin and death, by the spirit of life in Christ Jesus? --(4) We do not deny that the remains of the carnal mind still cleave to imperfect christians; and that, when the expression carnal is softened, and qualified, it may in a low fense be applied to such professors as those Corinthians were, to whom St. Paul faid, I could not speak to you as to SPIRITUAL. But, could not the apostle be yet spoken to as a SPIRITUAL man? And does he not allow, that even in the corrupted churches of Corinth and Galatia, there were some truly spiritual men-some adult, perfect christians? See 1 Cor. xiv. 37, and Gal. vi. 1.—(5) When the apostle calls the divided Corinthians carnal, he immediately foftens the expression by adding babes in Christ: If therefore the word carnal is applied to St. Paul in this fense, it must follow that the apostle was but a babe in Christ; And if he was but a babe, is it not as abfurd to judge of the growth of ADULT christians by bis growth, as to measure the stature of a man

by that of an infant?—(6) And lastly: The man described in Rom. vii. 14, is not only called carnal without any softening, qualifying phrase: but the word carnal is immediately heightened by an uncommon expression, sold under fin; which is descriptive of the strongest bondage of corruption. Thus reason, scripture, and criticism agree to set this argument aside.

ARG. III. "The carnal man, whose cause we plead, says, Rom. vii. 20, If I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin which dwalted leth in me,' that is, in my unrenewed part; and therefore he might be an eminent, apostolic faint in his RENEWED part; and a carnal, wretched man, fold under sin, in his unre-

Ans. (1) The aposse speaking there as a cornel, and yet awakened man, who has light enough to see his sinful habits, but not faith and resolution enough to overcome them; his meaning is evidently this: If I, as a carnal man, do what I, as an awakened man, would not; it is no more I that do it, that is, I do not do it according to my awakened conscience, for my conscience rises against my conduct: but it is fin that dwelleth in me: it is the tyrant sin, that has sull possession of me, and minds the dictates of my conscience no more, than an inexorable task-master minds the cries of an oppressed slave.

(2) If the pure love of God was field abroad in St. Paul's bears; and confirmed bim, he dwelt in love, and of confequence, in God: For St. John fays, He that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him.—He that is in you, is greater than he that is in the world. Now if God dwelt in Paul by his loving spirit, it becomes our objectors to shew that an indevelling God, and indevelling sin, are one and the same thing; or that the apostle had strangely altered his doctrine when he asked with I 3

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indignation, What concord hath Christ with Belial? For if indwelling in [the Belial within] was necessarily to nestle with Christ in St. Paul's heart, and in the hearts of all believers, should not the apostle have rather cried out with admiration, "See how great is the concord between Christ and Belial? They are inseparable! They always live in the same heart together; and nothing ever parted them, but what parts man and wife, that is, death."

(3) If a reluctance to ferve the law of fin is a proof that we are holy as Paul was holy, is therenot joy in heaven over the apostolic holiness of most robbers, and murderers in the kingdom? Canthey not fooner or later fay, With MY MIND [or conscience] I serve the law of God: but with my flesh the law of fin. How to perform what is good I find not. I would be honest and loving, if I could be so without denying myself: But I find a law, that when I would do good, evil is present with me? Nor can any thing be stronger upon this head, than. the words of the inhuman princess, who, being at the point of committing murder, cryed out : "My MIND" [that is, my reason or conscience] leads me to one thing, but my new, impetuous passion. carries me to another AGAINST MY WILL. I fee, 1 approve what is right, but I do what is cri-" minal +."

ARG. IV. "The man, whose experience is described in Rom, vii, is said to delight in the law of God after the inward man, and to serve the law of God with THE MIND; therefore he was partaker of apostolic holiness."

Ans. Does he not also say, WITH THE FLESH'

I serve the law of sin? And did not Medea say as

much

[†] Sed trahit invitam nova vis, aliudque cupido, Mens aliud fuadet. Video meliora, proboque, Deteriora sequor.

much in her way, before the imbrued her hands in innocent blood? What else could the mean when the cried out, "I see and approve WITH MY MIND what is right, the I do what is criminal?" Did not the pharisees for a time rejoice in the burning and shining light of John the Baptist? And does not an evangelist inform us, that Herod himself beard that man of God [n few] WITH DELIGHT, and did many things too? Mark vi. 20. But, is this a proof that either Medea, the Pharises, or Herod had attained apostolic holiness?

ARG. V. "The person who describes his unavailing struggles under the power of sin, cries
out at last, Who shall deliver me, &c. and immediately expresses a hope of future deliverance;
thanking God, for it, thro' Jesus Christ our
Lord, Rom. vii. 24, 25. Does not this shew
that the carnal man sold under sin was a christian
believer, and, of consequence, Paul himself?"

Ans. This shows only that the man fold under fire. and groaning for evangelical liberty, is supported under his unhappy circumstances by an hope of deliverance; and that, when the law, like a fevere fchool-mafter, has almost brought him to Jesus Christ; when he is come to the borders of Canaan and is not far from the kingdom of God, and the city of refuge, he begins to look and long earnestly for Christ, and has at times comfortable hopes of deliverance thro' him. He has a faith that defire liberty, but not a faith that obtains it. He has a degree of the faith to be healed, which is mentioned Acts xiv, q. but he has not yet the ACTUALLY-HEALING, prevailing faith, which St. John calls THE VICTORY, and which is accompanied with aninternal witness that Christ is formed in our bearts. It is abfurd to confound the carnal man, who struggles into Christ and liberty, faying Who shall deliver me, &c. with the SPIRITUAL man, who is come to Christ, stands in his redeeming power, and witneffes.

witnesses, that the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jefus, HAS MADE HIM FREE from the law of fin and death. The one may fay in his hopeful moments, I thank God [ISHALL HAVE the victory] thro' fefus Christ: but the other can fay, I HAVE it NOW. Thanks be to God, subo GIVETH US the victory thro' Jefus Christ our Lord. i Cor. xv. 57. The one wishes for, and the other enjoys liberty: The one has ineffectual defires; and the other has victorious babits. Such is the contrast between the CARNAL penitent described in Rom. vii. 14, and the OBEDI-ENT believer described in Rom. viii. 'There is a GREAT DIFFERENCE' [fays the Rev. Mr. Whitefield] between GOOD DESIRES and GOOD " HABITS. Many have the one, who never attain the other.' Many come up to the experience of a carnal penitent, subo never attain the experience of an obedient believer.] 'Many have good defires to fubdue fin; and yet, resting in those good defires, fin has always had the dominion over them: [with the flesh they have always jerved the law of fin.] A person fick of a fever may, defire to be in health, but that defire is not health itself. Whitefield's Works, Vol. iv. page 7. If the calvinifts would do justice to this important distinction, they would foon drop the argument which I answer, and the yoke of carnality which they try to fix upon St. Paul's neck.

ARG. VI. "You plead hard for the Apostle's spirituality: but his own plain confession shows, that he was really CARNAL, and sold under sine." Does he not say to the Corinthians, that there was given him a thorn IN THE FRESH, a messenger of Satan to busset him, lest be should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, which had been vouchfased him? 2 Cor, xii. 7.
Now what could this thorn in the stell be, but a sinful lust? And what this messenger of Satan, but pride or immoderate anger? Thrice be besought the Lord, that these plagues might depart from him,

" him, but God would not hear him. Indwelling

" fin was to keep him humble; and if St. Paul

" ftood in need of that remedy, how much more

" we?"

Ans. (1) Indwelling anger keeps us angry, and not meek: Indwelling pride keeps us proud, and not humble. The streams answer to the fountain. It is absurd to suppose, that a falt spring will send

forth frest water.

While you try to make him a modest imperfectional, you inadvertently represent him as an impudent antinomian; For, speaking of his thorn in the sless, and of the buffeting of Satan's messenger, he calls them his infirmities: and says, Most GLADLY therefore WILL I GLORY in MY INFIRMITIES. Now, if his infirmities were pride, a wrathful disposition, and a filthy lust; did he not act the part of a filthy antinomian, when he said that he GLORIED IN THEM? Would not even Paul's carnal man have blushed to speak thus? Far from GLORYING in his pride, wrath, or indwelling lust, did he not groan, O wretched man that I am?

(3) The apostle, still speaking of his thorn in the stell, and of Satan buffeting him by proxy, and still calling these trials his infirmities, explains himself farther in these words: Therefore I TAKE PLEASURE in infirmities, in reproaches, in persecutions, &c. for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then am I strong. Christ's strength is made perfect in my weakness. Those infirmities—that thorn in the stell—that buffeting of Satan, cannot then be indwelling sin, or any out-breaking of it: For the devil himself could do no more than to TAKE PLEASURE in his wickedness: and [in Rom. vii.] the carnal penitent himself belights in the law of God after the inward man, instead of TAKING PLEASURE in his indwel-

ling fin.

(4) The infirmities, in which St. Paul glories and takes pleasure, were such as had been GIVEN

THERE WAS GIVEN TO ME a thorn in the flesh, &c. 2 Cor. xii, 7. Those infirmities, and that thorn were not then indwelling fin, for indwelling fin was nor given bim after his visions; seeing it stuck fast in him long before he went to Damascus. It is absurd therefore to suppose that God gave bim the thorn of indwelling sin Afterwards, or in-

deed that he GAVE it him at all.

(5) If Mr. Hill wants to know what we understand by St. Paul's thorn in the flesh, and by the messenger of Satan that buffeted him: We reply, that we understand his bodily infirmities—the great weakness, and the violent head-ach, with which Tertullian and St. Chryfostom inform us the apostle was afflicted. The same God, who said to Satan concerning Job, Rebold be is in thine hand to touch his bone and his flesh, but save his life: - The fame God who permitted that adversary to bind a daughter of Abraham with a spirit of [bodily] infirmity for eighteen years; The same gracious God, I say, permitted Satan to afflict Paul's body with uncommon pains; and, at times, it feems, with preternatural weakness, which made his appearance and delivery contemptible in the eyes of his adversaries. That this is not a conjecture grounded upon uncertain tradition, is evident from the apostle's own words two pages before. His letters, Jay they [that buffeted me in the name of Satan] are weighty and powerful; but his bodily presence is WEAK, and his speech contemptible, 2 Cor. x. 10. And foon after, describing these emissaries of the devil, he fays: Such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ [to oppose me, and to prejudice you against my ministry :] And no marvel : for Satan bimfelf [who fets them on] is transformed into an angel of light. 2 Cor. xi. 13. But if the thorn in the flesh is all one with the buffeting messenger of satan, St. Paul's meaning is evidently this: 'God, who fuffered the Caanites to be scourges in the fides of the Ifrachtes,

fered Satan to bruise my heel, while I bruise his his head: And that adversary afflicts me thus, by his thorns and pricking briers, that is, by false apostles, who buffer me thro' malicious mitrepresentations which render me vile in your fight.'—This sense is strongly countenanced by these words of Ezekiel, They shall know that I am the Lord, and there shall be no more a PRICKING BRIER to the bouse of Israel, nor any GRIEVING THORN of all that are round about them, that DESPI-

SED them. Ezek. xxviii. 24.

Both these senses agree with reason and godliness, with the text and the context. Satan IMME-DIATELY pierced the apostle's body with preternatural pain : And, by the malice of falle bretbren, the opposition of false apostles within the church, and the fierceness of cruel persecutors without, he IMMEDIATELY endeavoured to cast down or destroy the zealous apostle. But Paul walked in the perfect way, and we may well fay of him, what was faid of Job on a fimilar occasion, In all this PAUL finned not, as appears from his own words in this very Epistle: I am exceeding joyful in all our tribulation .- Our flesh bad no rest, but we were troubled on every fide: Without the church were fightings, within were fears: [We had furious opposition from the heathens without; "and within, we feared lest our brethren should be discouraged by the number and violence of our adversaries:] Neverthelefs God, who comforted those that are cast down. comforted us .- We are troubled on every fide, YET NOT DISTRESSED; we are perplexed, but NOT IN DESPAIR; perfecuted, but NOT FORSAKEN; caft down, but not deftroy'd; always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jefus .- For which cause we faint not; but, the our outward man perif [thro' the thorns in our flesh, and the buffetings of Satan;] yet the inward man is renewed day by day ;-it grows stronger and stronger in the Lord.—When I fee St. Paul bear up with fuch undaunted fortitude,

ender the bruifing hands of Satan's messengers, and the pungent operation of the thorns in his sless; methinks I see the General of the christians waving the standard of CHRISTIAN PERFECTION, and erying, Be followers of me:—Be wholly spiritual.—Take unto you the WHOLE armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having DONE ALL, to stand, and to witness with me, that, in all these things, we are MORE than conquerors thro him that bath loved us.

ARG. VII. "You extol the apostle too much." He certainly was a carnal man still: For St.
"Luke informs us, that the contention [παροξυσμος]
"was so sharp between Barnabas and him, that they
departed one as ander from another, Acts xv. 39. Now
charity [8 παροξυνεται] is not provoked, or does
not contend. Strife or contention is one of the
fruits of the sless; and if St. Paul bore that
fruit, I do not see why you should scruple to call
him a carnal, wretched man, sold under sin."

Ans. (1) Every contention is not finful. The apostle says himself, Contend for the faith-BE ANGRY and fin not .- It is good to be ZEALOUSLY AFFECTED ALWAYS in a GOOD thing .- Jefus Christ did not break the law of love, when he looked round WITH ANGER upon the pharifees; being grieved for the hardness of their hearts. Nor does Moses charge sin upon God, where he says, The Lord rooted them out of their land IN ANGER, and IN WRATH, and in GREAT INDIGNATION. If St. Paul had contended in an uncharitable manner, I would directly grant that in that hour he fell from christian perfection: For we affert, that, as a carnal professor may occasionally cross Jordan, take a turn into the good land, and come back into the wilderness, as the spies did in the days of Joshua: fo a spiritual man, who lives in Canaan, may occafionally draw back, and take a turn in the wildernels, especially before he is firengthened, established,

and fettled under his heavenly vine, in the good land that flows with spiritual milk and honey. But this was not the apostle's case. There is not the least intimation given of his finning in the affair. Barnabas, fays the historian, DETERMINED to take with them his own nephew John Mark: but Paul THOUGHT NOT GOOD to do it, because when they had tried him before, he went not with them to the work, but departed from them from Pampbilia. Acts xv. 38. Now, by every rule of reason and scripture. Paul was in the right: for we are to try the firits, and lovingly to beware of men, especially of fuch men as have already made us fmart by their cowardly fickleness as John Mark had done, when he had left the itinerant apostles in the midst of their dangers.

(2) With respect to the word [recognition [] contention or provoking, it is used in a good, as well as in a bad fense. Thus Heb. x. 24, we read of [παροξυσμον αγαπης] a CONTENTION, OF & PRO-VOKING unto love and good works. And therefore, granting that a grain of partiality to his nephew. made Barnabas stretch too much that fine faying, Charity hopeth all things; yet, from the circumstances of Barnabas's parting with St. Paul, we have not the least proof that St. Paul stained at all his christian perfection in the affair.

If the reader properly weighs these answers to the arguments, by which our opponents try to flain the character of St. Paul as a spiritual man, he will fee, I hope, that the apostle is as much misreprefented by Mr. Hill's doctrine, as christian perfection is by his fictitious creed.

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SECTION IX.

St. PAUL, instead of owning bimself a carnal man, still fold under fin, presents us with a striking picture of the perfect christian, by occasionally describing HIS OWN spirituality and heavenly-mindedness. And therefore his genuine experiences are so many proofs, that christian persection is attainable, and has actually been attained in this life.—What St. Augustine and the Rev. Mr. Whitesield once thought of Rom. vii.—And how near this last divine, and the Rev. Mr. Romaine, sometimes come to the doctrine of christian persection.

R. HILL's mistake with respect to St. Paul's supposed carnality, is so much the more aftonishing, as the apostle's professed spirituality not only clears him, but demonstrates the truth of our doctrine. Having therefore rescued his character from under the feet of those who tread bis bonour in the dust, and sell his person under sin at an antinomian market, I shall retort the argument of our opponents; and, appealing to St. Paul's genuine and undoubted experiences, when he taught wifdom among the perfect, I shall present the reader with a picture of the perfect christian drawn at full length. Nor need I inform Mr. Hill, that the misrepresented apostle sits for his own picture before the glass of evangelical fincerity; and that turning spiritual felf-painter, with the pencil of a good conscience, and with colours mixed by the Spirit of Truth, he draws this admirable portrait from the life.—

Be followers of ME.—This ONE THING I DO; leaving the things that are behind, I press towards the mark, for the prize of my beavenly calling [a crown of glory]—Charity is the bond of perfection.—Love is the fulfilling of the law.—If I have not charity I am nothing. And what charity or love St. Paul had, appears

appears from Christ's words and from his own. Greater, [i. e. more perfect] love bath no man than this [fays our Lord] that be-lay down his life for his friends: Now, this very love Paul had for Christ, for fouls, yea, for the fouls of his fiercest adverfaries, the jews. Hear him. The love of Christ constraineth us .- For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain .- I long to depart and to be with Christ .- I count not my life dear unto myfelf, that I may finish my course with joy .- I AM READY not to be bound only, but TO DIE also for the name of the Lord Jefus .- If I be OFFERED up on the facrifice and fervice of your faith, I JOY AND REJOICE with you all. And in the next chapter but one to that, in which the apostle is supposed to profess himself actually fold under fin, he professes perfect love to his sworn enemies; even that love, by which the righteoufness of the kow is fulfilled in them, who walk after the Spirit. Hear him. I say the truth in Christ, I lie not; my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghoft, that I, &c. could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my kinfmen according to the flesh; meaning his inexorable, bloody perfecutors, the jews.

Nor was this love of St. Paul like a land-flood: it constantly flowed like a river. This living water fprang up constantly in his foul; witness these words: Remember, that, by the space of THREE YEARS, I ceased not to warn every one NIGHT AND DAY WITH TEARS .- Of many I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that THEY-mind earthly things : for our conversation is in beaven .-OUR rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience. that in fimplicity and godly fincerity, not with flefbly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have bad our conversation in the world.—I know nothing [i. e. no evil] by [or, of] myself.—We can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth.-W bether we are befides [i. e. carried out beyond] ourselves, it is To Gop : or whether we be fiber [i. e. calm,] it is FOR YOUR CAUSE : [i.e. The love of God and man' is the only fource of ALL my tempers, - Giving No K 2 OFFENCE!

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OFFENCE in ANY THING, but in ALL THINGS approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in MUCH PATIENCE, by pureness, by kindness, by love unfeigned; being FILLED with comfort, and EXCEEDING joyful in ALL our tribulation. - I will GLADLY found and be frent for you; the THE MORE ABUNDANTLY I love you, THE LESS I be loved: (A rare instance this, of the most perfect love!) - We speak before God in Chrift, we DO ALL THINGS, dearly Beloved, for your edifying .- I am crucified with Christ: Neversheles I live, yet not I [See here the destruction of forful felf!] but Christ liveth in me; and the life I NOW live IN THE FLESH, I live by the faith of the Son of God .- As ALWAYS, fo NOW also Christ shall be MAGNIFIED PN MY BODY, whether it be by life or by death; We worship God IN THE SPIRIT, and rejoice in Christ Fesus, and bave NO CONFIDENCE in the flesh .- Mark them who walk fo, as YE HAVE Us for an EXAMPLE. I have learned in WHATSO-EVER STATE I am therewith to be CONTENT: EVERY WHERE, and IN ALL THINGS, I am infructed both to abound and to fuffer need : I CAN DO ALL THINGS thro' Christ who strengtheneth me. - Teaching every man in ALL WISDOM, that I may present every man PERFECT in Christ Jefus; whereunto also I labour, STRIVING according to his working, which worketh IN ME MIGHTILY.

This description of the perfect christian, and of St. Paul, is so exceedingly glorious; and it appears to me fuch a refutation of the calvinian miftake which I oppose, that I cannot deny myself the pleasure, and my readers the edification of feeing the mifrepresented apostle give his own lovely picture a few more finishing strokes. WE speak NOT as PLEASING MEN, fays he, but as PLEASING GOD, who trieth OUR HEARTS. For neither AT ANY TIME used we flattering words, &c. God is witness: Nor of MEN SOUGHT WE GLORY, NEI-THER OF YOU, NOR YET OF OTHERS :- But WE were GENTLE among you, even as an NURSE CHERI-SHETH ber children-Being affectionately desirous of WOOD INCOM

you, we were willing to have imparted to you, not the gospel of God' only, but also our own souls;—
LABOURING NIGHT AND DAY, because we would not be chargeable to ANY of you. YB ARE witnesses, and God- Also, how holily, and justly, and one blameabley we behaved ourselves among you.—
The Lord make you abound in love one towards another, and towards all men, even as we do towards another, and towards anoth

When I read this wonderful experience of St. Paul, written by himfelf; and fee his doctrine of christian perfection so gloriously exemplified in hisown tempers and conduct; I am furprized, that good men should still confound Saul the jew, with Paul the christian; and should take the Son of the earthly Jerufulem, which is in bondage with ber children, for the Son of the Jerufalem from above, which. is firey and is the mother of us all, who fland in the liberty suberespith Christ bath made us free. - But upon fecond thoughts, I wonder no more: For if those who engross to themselves the title of cathelies, can believe that. Christ took his own body in his own fingers, and broke it thro' the middle when he took bread, broke it, and faid, This is my body which is broken for you: why cannot those, who monopolize the name of orthodox among us, believe also that St. Paul froke without a figure, when he faid, I am carnal, fold under fin, and brought into captivity to the law of fin aubich is in my members .- Brethren; I. befiech you be as I am:-Those things subich ye have beard and feen in me, dog. and the God of peace Shall be with your. Now you. have beard and jeen, that the evil qubich I would not; that I.do; and that with my flesh I ferve the law of fin. In thort, you have heard and feen, that I am: garnal, fold under fin. K. 3:

I am not at all furprized, that carnal and injudicious profesiors should contend for this contradicsory doctrine, this fieth-pleasing standard of calvimian inconfishency, and christian imperfection. But that good, and in other respects judicious men, should so zealously contend for it, appears to me aftonishing! They can never defign to confound carnal bondage with evangelical liberty, and St. Paul's christian experience with that of Medea, and "Mr. Fulfone," in order to countenance gross antinomianism: Nor can they take any pleasure, in missepresenting the holy apostle. Why do they then patronize so great a mistake? I answer still: By the fame reason which makes pious papiles believe that confecrated bread is the real flesh of Christ. Their priests and the Pope say so: Some figurative expressions of our Lord feem to countenance their faying. We protestants, whom the papists call carnal reasoners and beretics, are of a different fentiment; and should they believe as we do, their humility and orthodoxy would be in danger. Apply this to the present case. Calvinian divines and St. Augustin affirm, that St. Paul. humbly spake his present experience when he said, I. am cornal, &c. We who are called "Arminians and "Perfectionists," think the contrary; and our pious opponents suppose, that if they thought as we do, they should lose their humility and orthodoxy. Their error therefore springs chiefly from miltaken fears, and not from a wilful opposition to truth.

Nor is St. Augustin fully for our opponents: We have our part in the Bishop of Hippo, as well as they. If he was for them, when his controversy with Pelagius had heated him; he was for us, when he yet stood upon the scriptural line of moderation. Then he fairly owned, that the man, whom the apostle personates in Rom. vii, is bome sub lege positus ante gratiam; —A man under the [condemning, irritating] power of the law, who is yet a stranger to the liberty and power of Christ's gofpel. Therefore, if Mr. Hill claims St. Augustin the

the prejudiced controvertist, we claim St. Angustin the unprejudiced Father of the church; or rather. fetting afide his dubious authority, we continue our appeal to unprejudiced reason and plain seripture.

What I fay of St. Augustin may be faid of the Rev. Mr. Whitefield. Before he had embraced St. Augustin's mistakes, which are known among usby the name of Calvinijm, he believed, as well as that Father, that the disconsolate man who groans, W bo fall deliver me ? is not a possessor, but a feeker of christian liberty. To prove it I need only transcribe the latter part of his fermon intitled. The

marks of the new birth.

' Thirdly' [fays be] ' I address myself to those, who are under the drawings of the Father, and are GOING THRO' THE SPIRIT OF BONDAGE : but not finding the marks' [of the new birth]: before mentioned, are ever crying out' [as the carnal penitent, Rom. vii,] ' WHO SHALL DELT-VER US FROM THE BODY OF THIS DEATH? Defpair not: for notwithstanding your present trouble, IT MAY BE the divine pleafure to give you the kingdom. [Hence it appears that Mr. Whitefield did not look upon fuch mourners as christian believers; but only as perfons, who MIGHT BECOME fuch if they earnestly sought. He therefore most judirioufly exborts them to feek till they find]grace of God thro' Jesus Christ' [adds be] is.
ABLE TO DELIVER YOU, and GIVE YOU WHAT YOU WANT : Even YOU MAY receive the Spirit of adoption, the promise of the Father. All things are possible with him; persevere therefore in seeking, and determine to find no rest in your spirit, till you know and feel, that you are thus born again from above, and God's spirit witnesses with your spirits, that you are the children of God.

What immediately follows is a demonstrationthat, AT THAT TIME, Mr. Wbitefield was no enemy to christian persection, and thought that somehad actually attained it: Or else nothing would have been more trifling than his concluding address to perfect christians. Take his own words, and remember that when he preached them, by the ardor of his zeal and the devotedness of his heart, he shewed himself a young man in Christ, able to trample under soot the most alluring baits of the flesh and of the world,

· Fourthly and lastly' [fays he] · I address my-· felf to those, who have received the Holy Ghost in ALL its fanctifying graces, and are almost ripe for glory. Hail, HAPPY SAINTS! For ' your heaven is begun upon earth. You have already received the first fruits of the Spirit, and: e are patiently waiting till that bleffed change: come, when your harvest shall be complete. I fee and admire you, THO' ALAS! AT I SO GREAT A DISTANCE FROM YOU. Your life, I' know, is hid with Christ in God. You have comforts, you have meat to eat, which a finful " carnal, &c. world knows nothing of. Christ's yoke is now become EASY TO YOU, and his BURDEN. LIGHT: You HAVE PASSED THRO' the pangs of the new-birth, and now rejoice that Christ Jesus. 15 FORMED in your hearts. You know what it: is to DWELL IN CHRIST, and CHRIST IN YOU. Like Iacob's ladder, altho' your bodies are on.

At that time Mr. Whilefield was in orders, and had received the Spirit of adoption. As a proof of it, Lappeal (1) To the account of his conversion at Oxford before he was ordained: And (2) To these his own words, "I can say, to the honour of rich, "free, distinguishing grace, that I received the Spirit of adoption before I had conversed with one man, or read a single book on the doctrine of free justification by the imputed right teousness of Jesus Christ."—That is, before he had had any opportunity of being drawn from the simplicity of the seripture-gospel, into the calvinian refinements. See his Works. Vol. IV. page 45.—Now, those christians, who leave babes and young men in Christ "AT SO GREAT A DISTANCE FROM THEM," are the very persons whom we call Fathers in Christ, or Persons Them.

earth, yet your fouls and hearts ARE IN HEA-VEN; and by your faith and CONSTANT recol-Iection, LIKE THE BLESSED ANGELS YOU DO ALWAYS BEHOLD the face of your Father which is in heaven. I NEED NOT THEN EXHORT YOU to PRESS FORWARD, &c. Rather I will exhort you in patience to possess your souls yet a little while, and Jesus Christ will deliver you from the burden of the flesh, and an ABUNDANT entrance shall be administred unto you into the eternal joy, &c. of his heavenly kingdom.' I have met with few descriptions of the perfect christian that please me better. I make but one objection to it. Mr. Whitefield thought, that the believers, who by constant recollection, like the bleffed angels, always behold the face of their Father,' are fo advanced in grace, that they "need not be exberted to " press forward." This is carrying the doctrine of perfection higher than, Mr. Welley ever did. For my part, were I to preach to a congregation of fuch " bappy faints," I would not feruple taking this text, So run that you may [eternally] obtain: Nor would I forget to fet before them the example of the perfect apostle, who said, This one thing Ide, leaving the things that are behind, and reaching forth, &c. I press towards the mark, &c. Had I been in Mr. Whirefield's case, I own, I would either have refused to join the imperfectionists, or I would have recanted my address to perfect christians.

So strong is the scriptural tide in favour of our doctrine, that it sometimes carries away the Rev. Mr. Romaine himself. Nor can I confirm the wavering reader in his belief of the possibility of obtaining the glorious liberty which we contend for, better than by transcribing a fine exhortation of that great minister to what we call christian perfection, and what be calls The walk of Faith.

God, my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, &c. The Lord here engages to take

away the stony heart, and to give an heart of flesh, upon which he will write the ten commandments. &c, The love of God will open the contracted heart, enlarge the felfish, warm the cold, and bring liberality out of the covetous. When the holy spirit teaches brotherly love, he overcomes all opposition to it, &c. he writes upon their hearts the two great commandments, on which hang all the law and the prophets. The Love of God, fays the apostle to the Romans, is feed abroad in our bearts by the Holy Ghoft; and to the Thessalonians, Ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another. Thus he engages the foul to the holy law, and inclines the inner man to love obedience. It CEASES TO BE A YOKE AND A BURDEN. How EASY is it to do what one loves? If you DEARLY love any person, WHAT A PLEASURE is it to ferve him? What will not love put you upon DOING, or SUFFERING to oblige him? Let love rule in the heart to God and to man, his LAW WILL THEN BECOME DELIGHTFUL, and OPEDIENCE to it WILL BE PLEASANTNESS. The foul will run; yea, infpired by love it will MOUNT UP WITH WINGS as " EAGLES, in the way of God's commandments. Happy are THE PEOPLE THAT ARE IN SUCH A CASE.'-[Now SUCH A CASE is what we call The state of christian perfection, to the obtaining of which, Mr. Romaine excites his own foul by the following excellent exhortation.

'This is the very tenor of the covenant of grace, which the almighty spirit has undertaken to sulfil [if we mix faith with the promises, as Mr. Romaine himself will soon intimate] 'And he cannot fail in his office. It is his crown and glory to make good his covenant-engagements. O trust him then, and put honour upon his faithfulness,' [that is, if I mistake not, make good YOUR OWN covenant-engagements.] 'He has promised, to guide thee with his council, and to strengthen thee with his might, &c. What is within thee, or

without thee to oppose thy walking in love with him, he will incline thee to refitt, and he will enable thee to overcome. O WHAT MAYEST THOU NOT EXPECT from such a divine friend, who is to abide with thee on purpose to keep ' THY HEART RIGHT with God.' [QUERY: cuben the heart is kept full of indwelling fin, is it kept right with God?] 'What CANNOT he do, what WILL he not po for THEE? Such as is the love of the Father and of the Son, fuch is the love of the Holy Ghost; the fame FREE, PERFECT, EVER-LASTING LOVE. Read his promifes of it. Meditate on them. Pray to him for INCREA-SING FAITH TO MIX WITH THEM; that HE [not SIN] ' DWELLING in the temple of thy heart, thou mayest have fellowship there with the Father and with the Son. Whatever in thee is pardoned thro' the Son's atonement, pray the holy Spirit to fubdue, that it may not interrupt communion with thy God. And WHATEVER GRACE is to be received out of the fulness of Iefus, in order to keep up, and to promote that 'communion, intreat the Holy Spirit to give it thee with GROWING STRENGTH. BUT pray in FAITH, NOTHING WAVERING. So shall the love of God RULE IN THY HEART. And THEN thou fhalt be LIKE THE SUN, when it goeth forth in IT's MIGHT, fhining CLEARER and clearer to the PERFECT DAY. O may thy course be like his, as FREE, as REGULAR, and as-COMMUNICATIVE OF GOOD, that thy DAILY PETITION MAY BE ANSWERED, and that THE WILLOF THY FATHER MAY BE DONE ON EARTH. AS IT IS IN HEAVEN." Walk of Faith. Vol. 1. page 227, &c.

I do not produce this excellent quotation to infinuate, that the Rev. Mr. Romaine, is a perfectionist, but only to edify the reader, and to show, that the good mistaken men, who are most prejudiced against our doctrine, see it sometimes so true, and fo excellent, that, forgetting their pleas for indwelling fin, they intimate that our daily petition may be answered; and that THE WILL OF OUR FATHER may be DONE ON EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN, an expression this, which includes the height and depth of all christian persistion.

SECTION X.

ST. JOHN is for christian perfection, and not for a death-purgatory. I John i. 8, &c. is explained agreeably to St. John's design, the context, and the vein of boly doctrine, which runs thro' the rest of the epistle.

HE scripture declares that we are built upon the FOUNDATION of the Apofles; Jefus Christ bimfelf being the chief corner-flone : And St. Paul being deservedly considered as the chief of the Apostles, and of consequence as the chief stone of the foundation, on which [next to the corner-itone] our holy religion is built; who can wonder at the pains which our opponents take, to represent this important part of our foundation as carnal, wretched and fold under fin? Does not every body fee, that Juch a foundation becomes the antinomian structure which is raifed upon it? And is it not incumbent upon the opposers of antinomianism, to uncover that wresched foundation by removing the heaps of dirt, in which St. Paul's spirituality is daily buried; and by this means, to rescue the baly apostle, whom our adversaries endeavour to sell under sin as a carnal wretch? This rescue has been attempted in the four last fections. If I have succeeded in this charitable attempt, I may proceed to vindicate the holiness of St. John, who is the last apostle, that Mr. Hill calls to the help of indwelling-fin, christian imperfection, and a death-purgatory. Before

Before I show how the loving apostle is present into a service, which is so contrary to bis experience and to his doctrine of persell love, I shall make a preliminary remark.—To take a scripture out of the context, and to make it speak a language contrary to the obvious design of the sacred writer, is the way of butchering the body of scriptural divinity. This conduct injures truth, as much as the Galatians would have injured themselves, if they had literally pull'd their eyes out, and given them to St. Paul: An edifying passage thus displaced, may become as loathsome to a moral mind; as a good eye torn out of its bleeding orb in a good face, is odious to a tender heart.

Among the passages which have been thus treated, none has suffered more violence than this: If we say that we have no sin, we deceive our-felves, and the truth is not in us. I John, i. 8.

—"That's enough for me," [says an hasty imperfectionist:] "St, John clearly pleads for the "indwelling of sin in us during the term of life, and "he is so set against those who profess deliverance "from sin, and christian perfection in this life, "that he does not scruple to represent them as liars, and self-deceivers.

Our opponents suppose, that this argument is unanswerable. But to convince them that they are mistaken, we need only prove, that the sense which they so considertly give to the words of St. John, is contrary (1) To his design: (2) To the context: and (3) To the pure and strict doctrine, which he

inforces in the rest of the epistle.

I. With respect to St. John's DESIGN, it evidently was to confirm believers, who were in danger of being deceived by antinomian and anti-christical seducers. When he wrote this epistle, the church began to be corrupted by men, who, under pretence of knowing the mysleries of the gospel better than the apostles, imposed upon the ample jewish fables, heathenish dreams, or vain, philosophic speculations; infinuating that their doctrinal peculiarities

were the very marrow of the golpel. Many fuch arose at the time of the reformation, who introduced stoical dreams into protestantism, and whom Bishop Latimer, and others, steadily opposed under the

name of Gofpellers.

The doctrines of all these Gospellers centered in making Christ, indirectly at least, the minister of fin; and in representing the preachers of practical felf-denying christianity, as persons unacquainted with christian liberty. It does not indeed appear that the Gnoslicks, or Knowing ones, [for so the ancient Gospellers were called] carried matters so far as openly to fay, that believers might be God's dear children in the very commission of adultery and murder, or while they worshipped Milcom and Ashtaroth: but it is certain that they could already reconcile the verbal denial of Christ, fornication and idolatrous feafting, with true faith; directly or indirectly teaching and seducing Christ's servants to commit fornication, and to cat things facrificed to idols, Rev. ii. 20. At these antinomians St. Peter, St, James and St. Jude levelled their epiftles. Paul strongly cautioned Timothy, Titus, and the Ephelians against them. (See Ephel. iv, 14-v, 6.) And St. John wrote his first epistle to warn the believers who had not yet been feduced into their error: a dreadful, the pleafing error this, which, by degrees, led some to deny Christ's law, and then his very name: Hence the triumph of the spirit of anticbrift. Now as these men infinuated, that believers could be righteous without doing righter oufness; and as they supposed, that Christ's righteousness, or our own knowledge and faith, would supply the want of internal fanchification and external obedience; St. John maintains against them the necessity of that practical godliness, which consists in not committing fin, in not transgressing the law, in keeping the commandments, and in walking as Christ avalked: Nay, he afferts that Christ's blood, thro' the faith which is our victory, purifies from ALL fin, and cleanses from ALL unrighteousness. To make

him therefore plead for the necessary continuance of indwelling fin, or beart-un ighteousness, till we go into a death-purgatory, is evidently to make him

DEFEAT HIS OWN DESIGN.

II. To be more convinced of it, we need only read the controverted text in connexion with the CONTEXT; illustrating both by fome notes in -St. John opens his commission thus-[1st Epistle, chap. i. 5, 6, 7.] This is the meffage which we have received of him (Christ) and declare unto you, that God is light, [bright, transcendent purity] and in bim is no darkness [no impurity] at all. If we [believers] fay, that we have fellowship with him I that we are united to him by an actually living faith, and walk in darkness, [in impurity, or fin,] we lie and do not the truth. But if we watk in the light as be is in the light, [if we live up to our christian light and do righteoufnefs,] eve b fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jefes Christ bis fon CLEANSETH us from ALL SIN. [-For, let no man deceive you; be that DOES righteenfuefs is righteous, even as be, Christ, is righteous:—And in bim is no sine I John, iii. 5, 7.] So far we fee no plea, either for fin, or for the Calvinian purgatory.

Should Mr. Hill reply, that, " When St. John " fays, The BLOOD of Christ CLEANSETH us from " ALL fin, the loving apostle means ALL but IN-" DWELLING SIN; because this is a fin, from " which death alone can cleanse us:" We demand a proof, and in the mean time we answer, that St. John, in the above-quoted paffages, fays, that be who does righteousness in the full sense of the word, is righteous, as Christ is righteous; obferving, that IN HIM (Christ) is NO SIN. So certain then, as there is no INDWELLING for in Christ there is no INDWELLING fin in a believer, who does righteou nels in the full fense of the word; for he is made perfect in love, and is CLEANSED from ALL sin.-Nor was St. John himself ashamed to profefs this glorious liberty: For he faid, Our LOVE

IS MADE PERFECT, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; BECAUSE AS HE [Christ] is [perfect in love, and of confequence without fin :] SO ARE WE IN THIS WORLD, I John iv. 17. And the whole context shows, that the beloved apostle spake these great words of a likeness to Christ with respect to the perfett love which fulfile the law, abolishes tormenting fear, and enables the believer to stand with boldness in the day of judgment, as being forgiven, and conformed to the image of

God's Son.

If Mr. Hill urges, that "The blood of Christ powerfully applied by the Spirit, cleanses us indeed from the guilt, but not from the flebiness of fin; blood having a reference to justification " and pardon, but not to fanctification, and boliu ness:" We reply, that this argument is not only contrary to the preceding answer, but to the text, the context, and other plain scriptures. (1) To the text, where our being CLEANSED from all fin is evidently suspended on our humble and faithful WALK: IF WE WALK in the light as he is in the light, the BLOOD of Christ CLEANSES MI, &C. Now every novice in gospel-grace knows, that true protestants do not suspend a finner's just 181-CATION on his WALKING in the light as God is in the light.—(2) It is contrary to the CONTEXT: For in the next verse but one, where St. John evidently distinguishes forgiveness and boliness, he peculiarly applies the word CLEANSING to the latter of their bleffings. He is faithful to FORGIVE us our fins, [by taking away our GUILT;] and to CLEANSE us from ALL unrighteousness, [by taking away ALL THE FILTH of indwelling fin.]-And (3) It is contrary to other places of feripture, where Christ's blood is represented as having a reference to purification, as well as to forgiveness. God himself fays, Wash ye; make you CLEAN; put away the evil of your doings; cease to do evil; karn to do well. The washing and cleansing here spoken of, have undoubtedly a reference to the removal of the filth,

as well as of the guilt of fin. Accordingly we read, that all those who fland before the throne, have both WASHED their robes, and MADE THEM WHITE in the BLOOD of the lamb. That is, They are justified by, and sanctified with his blood. Hence our church prays "that we may so cat the flesh of Christ and drink his blood, that our SINFUL bodies may be MADE CLEAN by his body, and our souls WASHED [i. e. made clean also] thro' his most precious blood." To rob Christ's blood of it's sanctifying power, and to confine its efficacy to the atonement, is therefore an antinomian mistake, by which our opponents greatly injure the Saviour, whom they pretend to exalt.

Should Mr. Hill affert, that, "When St. John " fays, If we walk in the light, &c. the blood of " Christ cleanses us from all fin, the loving apostle " meaning is not, that the blood of Christ radi-" cally cleanfes us; but only, that it begins and " carries on a cleaning from all fin, which cleanf-" ing will be completed in a death-purgatory:" We answer: (1) This affertion leaves Mr. Hill's doctrine open to all the above-mentioned difficulties .- (2) It overthrows the doctrine of the proteftants, who have always maintained, that nothing is absolutely necessary to eternal salvation, and of confequence to our perfect cleanfing, but an obedient, Redfast faith, apprehending the full virtue of Christ's purifying blood, according to Acts xv. o. God, giving them the Holy Ghoft, put no difference between them and us, PURIFYING their bearts BY FAITH; -not BY DEATH .- (3) It is contrary to matter of fact; Enoch and Elijah having been translated to heaven, and therefore having been perfectly purified even in body, without going into the Calvinian purgatory. - But (4) What displeases us most in the evalive argument which I answer, is, that it pours the greatest contempt on Christ's blood, and puts the greatest cheat on weak believers, who fincerely want to be now made perfect in love, that they may now worthily magnify God's holy name. An L3

An illustration will prove it. I suppose that Christis now in England, doing as many wonderful cures as he formerly did in Judea. My benevolent opponent runs to the Sales infirmary, and tells all the patients there, that the great physician, the Son of God, has once more visited the earth; that he again HEALS all manner of fickness and deseases among the people, and CLEANSES from the most inveterate leprofy by a touch or a word. All the nations believe Mr. Hill; fome hop to this wonderful Saviour, and others are carried to his footfool. They touch and retouch him: He strokes them round again and again: But not one of them is cured. The wounds of fome are indeed skinned over for a time; but, it foon appears, that they still fester at the bottom, and that a painful. core remains unextracted in every fore. The poor ereatures complain to Mr. Hill. "Did you not." Sir, affure us upon your honour, as a christian gentleman, that Christ HBALS all manner of difeafes, and CLEANSES from all kinds of leprofies?"-True, fays Mr. Hill; but you must know, that these words do not mean, that he RADICALLY cures any difease, or CLEANSES from any leprosy : They only fignify, that he BEGINS to cure every disease, and continues to cleanse from all leprofies: But, notwithstanding all his cures begun and continued, no body is cured before death. So, my friends, you must bear your festering fores as well. as you can, till death comes RADICADLY to cleanfe: and cure you from them all. - Inflead of crying, Sweet grace! rich grace! and of clapping Mr. Hill for his evangelical message, the disappointed patients defire him to take them back to the infirmary, faying: We have there a chance for a cure before death: but your great physician pronounces us incurable, unless death comes to the help of his art; and we think that any empiric could do as. much, if he did not do more. [See SECT. XII. Arg. 20.]

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If Mr. Hill fays, that I beat the air, and that the text which he quotes in his "Creed for perfectionists," to shew that it is impossible to be clean-fed from all sin before death, is not I John, i. 7, but the NEXT VERSE; I reply, that if St. John afferts in the 7th verse, that Christ's blood, powerfully applied by the spirit of faith chanset as from ALL SIN, that inspired writer cannot be so exceedingly inconsistent, as to contradict himself in the very NEXT VERSE.

Should the reader ask: "What then can be St.

John's meaning in that verse, where he declares,
that If we say that we have no sin, we DECEIVE

ourselves, and the truth is not in us? How can
these words possibly agree with the doctrine of a

" perfect cleaning from ALE fin?"

We answer, that, St. John having given his first froke to the antinomian believers of his day, strikes by the bye a blow at pharifais professors. There were in St. John's time, as there are in our own, numbers of men, who had never been properly convinced of fin, and who boasted, [as Paul once did that touching the righteoufness of the law, they were blameless: They served God-they did their duty-they gave alms-they never did any body any harm-they thanked God, that they were not as other men; but especially, that they were not like those mourners in Sion, who were no doubt very wicked, fince they made fo much ado about God's mercy, and a powerful application of the Redeemer's all-cleanfing blood. How proper then was it for St. John, to inform his readers, that that these whole-bearted christians, these perfect pharifees, were no better than liars and felf-deceivers; and that true christian righteousness is always attended by a genuine conviction of our native depravity and by an humble acknowledgment of our actual transgreffions.

This being premised; it appears, that the text so dear to, and so mistaken by our opponents, has this fair, scriptural meaning: "If we [followers

him, who came not to call the righteous, but finners to repentance] far ave bave No SIN, [no native depravity from our first parents, and no actual fin, at least no such fin as deserves God's wrath; fancying we need not secure a particular application of Christ's atoning and purifying

blood] we deceive ourselves, and the truth [of re-

pentance and faith is not in us.

That these words are levelled at the monstrous error of felf-conceited, and felf-perfected pharifees, and not at the glorious liberty of the children of God, appears to us indubitable from the following reasons: - (1) The immediately-preceding verse throngly afferts this liberty.—(2) The verse immediately following fecures it also, and cuts down the doctrine of our opponents; the apostle's meaning being evidently this :--- 'Tho' I write to you, that if we fay, We are originally free from fin, and never did any harm, sue deceive ourselvest ' Yet, mistake me not: I do not mean that we e need continue under the guilt, or in the mo-' ral infection of any fin, original or actual: For if we penitently and believingly confess both, be is faithful and just to forgive us our fins, and to cleanse us from ALL unrighteousness, whether "it be native or felf-contracted, internal or external. Therefore, if we have attained the glorious liberty of God's children, we need not, thro' voluntary humility, fay, that we do nothing: but fin. It will be fufficient, when we are clean-· fed from all unrighteousness, still to be deeply humbled for our present infirmities, and for our ' past fins; confessing both with godly forrow and " filial shame. For if we should say, WE HAVE ' NOT SINNED,' [Note: St. John does not write, If we should fay, WE DO NOT SIN,] ' sue make bim a liar, and the truth is not in us;] common fense dictating, that if we bave not finned, we speak an. untruth, when we profess that Christ has forgiven OUR SINS. This appears to us the true meaning of 1 John, i. 8. when it is fairly considered in the hight of the CONTEXT. III. We

III. We humbly hope; that Mr. Hill himself will be of our sentiment, if he compares the verse in debate with the pure and strict doctrine, which St. John inforces throughout this Epistle. In the second chapter he says: We know that we know him, if we keep his commandments, &c. Whose keepeth his word, in him verify is the love of God perfected. He that abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked, &c. He that loveth his brother abideth in the light (where the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin) and there is none occasion of stumbling in him.

The fame doctrine runs also thro' the next chapter. Every one that bath this bope in bim, PURIFIETH HIMSELF EVEN AS HE (Christ) IS PURE. Whofeever COMMITTETH SIN TRANSGRESSETH als THE LAW, &c. and ye know, that he was manifested to TAKE AWAY our fins [i. e. to destroy them root and branch :] and in bim is NO SIN. Wheferver ebideth in bim SINNETH NOT : wbofoever finneth, dees not [properly] fee him neither know him: He that does righteousness is righteous EVEN AS HE [Christ] is righteons. He that committeth fin, [i. e. as appears by the context, be that transgresset the law, is of the devil : for the devil finneth from the beginning : For this purpose was the Son of God manifested, that be might DESTROY the works of the devil. Whofever is born of God, [Whosoever is made partaker of God's holiness according to the perfection of the christian dispensation] doth not commit fin, [i. e. does not transgress the law;] for bis fied [the ingrafted word, made quick and powerful by the indwelling Spirit] remaineth in him, and [morally speaking be cannot fin, because be is [thus] BORN or God. - For if ye know that be is righteous, ye know that every one that doth righteoufness is BORN OF HIM, and that he that doth not righteoufness, -he that committeth fin, or transgresseth the law, is, so far, of the devil; for the devil transgresseth the law, i. c. finneth from the beginning. In this the children

children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil +. Whosever does not righteousness, [i. e. whosever sinnerh, taking the word in it's evangelical meaning,] is not of God. I John iii. 3—11. ii. 29-

If Mr. Hill cries out, Shocking! Who are those men that do not SIN? I reply, All those whom St. John speaks of, a few veries below, Beloved, if our beart condemn us; [and it will condemn us if we fin, but God much more, for] God is greater than our beart. &c. Beloved, if our beart condemn us not, we have confidence towards God, &c. because WE KEEP HIS . COMMANDMENTS, AND DO THOSE THINGS THAT ARE PLEASING in his fight. I John iii. 20, &c .- Now we apprehend, all the fophistry in the world will never prove, that, evangelically fpeaking, keeping God's commandments and doing what pleafes bim, is SINNING. Therefore, when St. John professed to keep God's commandments, and so do what is pleafing in his fight: he professed what our opponents call finless perfection, and what we call christian perfection.

Mr. Hill is so very unhappy in his choice of St. John, to close the number of his apostolic witnesses for christian imperfection, that, were it not for a few clauses of his first epistle, the anti-solifidian severity of that apostle might drive all imperfect christians to despair. And what is most remarkable those few encouraging clauses are all conditional: If any man sin [for there is no necessity that he should:] Or rather [according to the most literal sense of the word amopro, which being in the aorist has generally the force of a past tense] If any man HAVE SINNED:—If he have not sinned unto death: If we consess our sins:—If that which ye have

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⁺ This doctrine of St. John is perfectly agreeable to that of our Lord, who faid, that Judas HAD A DEVIL, because he gave place to the love of money; and who called Peter himself SATAN, when he savoured the things of men, in opposition to the things of God.

beard shall remain in you :- If we walk in the light : -then do we evangelically enjoy the benefit of our Advocate's intercession. Add to this, that the first of those clauses is prefaced by these words, My little children, theje things I write unto you, THAT YE SIN NOT; and all together are guarded by these dreadful declarations : He that Jays, I know bim, and keepeth not bis commandments, is a liar .- If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in bim .- If any man fay, I love God-and loveth not bis brother [Note: he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law] be is a liar .- There is a fin unto death, I do not say that he shall pray for it. Let no man deceive you, he that DOES righteousness is righteous-He that committeth fin for transgresleth the law] is of the devil. To represent St. John therefore, as an enemy to the doctrine of christian perfection, does not appear to us less absurd, than to represent Satan as a friend to complete bolinefs.

SECTION XI.

Why the privileges of believers under the GOSPEL OF CHRIST, cannot be justly measured by the experiences of believers under the LAW OF MOSES. Areview of the passages, upon which the enemies of christian perfection sound their hopes, that Solomon, Isaiah, and Joh, were strong imperfectionists.

If Mr. Hill had quoted Salomon, instead of St. John; and jewish, instead of christian saints; he might have attacked the glorious, christian liberty of God's children with more success: for the beir as long as he is a child [in jewish nonage] different nothing from a servant; but is under tutors [and school-masters] until the time appointed by the Father. Even so we, when we were children, were in hondage;—But when the sulness of the time was come,

God fent bis fon made of a woman, made under the law, that we might receive the adoption of jons, -and fland in the [peculiar] liberty, subcrewith CHRIST bas made us [christians] free. Gal. iii. 1.—iv. 1. But this very passage, which shews that jews are [comparatively speaking] in bondage, shews also that the christian dispensation, and its high privi-leges, cannot be measured by the inferior privileges of the jewish dispensation, under which Solomon lived: For the law made nothing perfect in the christian sense of the word: And what the law could not do, God sending his only son, condemned sin in the stell, that the righteoniness of the law might be fulfilled in us [christian believers] who walk after the spirit; being endued with that large measure of it, which began to be poured out on believers in the day of pentecolt: for that measure of the spirit was not given before; because Jesus was not yet glorified, John vii. 39. But after he had ascended on bigb, and had obtained the gift of the indwelling comforter for believers; they received, fays St. Peter, the end of their faith, even the christian salvation of their fouls: [a falvation this, which St. Paul justly calls fo great salvation, when he compares it with jewish privileges. Heb. ii. 3.] Of which [christian] falvation the [jewish] prophets have enquired, who proobefied of the grace that should come unto you [christians;] fearching what or what manner of time the spirit of Christ, which was in them [according to their dispensation] did fignify, when it testified before band the sufferings of Christ, and the glory [the glorious dispensation] that should follow [his return to heaven, and accompany the out-pouring of his spirit.] Unto whom [the jewish prophets] it was revealed, that NOT UNTO THEMSELVES, but UNTO us [christians] they did minister the things, which are now preached unto you with the Holy Ghoft jent down from beaven. I Pet. i. 9, &c. And, among those things, the scriptures reckon the coming of the spiritual kingdom of Christ with power into the heart of believers, and the baptism of fire, or the perfect

perfect love, which burns up the chaff of in, the roughly purges God's floor, and makes the hearts of perfect believers an babitation of God thro the spirit,

and not a nest for indwelling fin.

As this doctrine may appear new to Mr. Hill, I beg leave to confirm it by the testimony of two as eminent divines as England has lately produced. The one is Mr. Baxter, who [in his comment upon these words, A testament is of force after men are dead, &cc. Heb. ix. 17, very justly ob-ferves, that "His [Christ's] covenant has the "nature of a reflament, which supposeth the death
of the testator, and is not of efficacy till then
to give full right of what he bequeatheth " Note, that the eminent, evangelical kingd of the Mediator, in its LAST, FULL edition, called the kingdom of Christ, and of beaven, diftinct from the obscure state of promise before Christ's incarnation, began at Christ's resurrec-" tion, ascention, and fending of the eminent gift of the Holy Ghoft, and was but as an embri "before."-My other witness is the Rev. Mr. Whitefield, who propoles and answers the following question: "Why was not the Holy Ghost given till Jesus Christ was glorified? — Because till then he was himself on the earth, and had not taken on him the kingly office, nor pleaded the merits of his death before his heavenly father, by which he purchased that invaluable bleffing for us." See his Works, Vol. IV. p. 362. Hence I conclude, that, as the full measure of the spirit, which perfeds christian believers, was not given before our Lord's ascention, it is as abfurd to judge of christian perfection by the experiences of those who died before that remarkable event, as to measure the powers of a sucking child by those of an embrio.

This might suffice to unnerve all the arguments which our opponents produce from the old testament against christian perfection. However we are willing to consider a moment those passages by

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which they plead for the necessary indwelling of fin, in all christian believers, and defend the walls of the Jericho within, that accursed city of refuge for spiritual Canaanites and Diabolonians.

I. 1 Kings viii. 46, &c. Solomon prays, and fays, If they [the jews] fin against thee (FOR THERE NO MAN THAT + SINNETH NOT) and thou be ANGRY with them, and deliver them to the enemy, fo that they carry them away captive, -yes, if they BE-THINK THEMSELVES, and REPENT, and make Supplication unto thee, and RETURN UNTO THEE WITH ALL THEIR HEART, and WITH ALL THEIR soul; -then bear thou their prayer, No unprejudiced person, who, in reading this passage, takes the parenthesis (For THERE 18 NO MAN THAT SINNETH NOT) in the connexion with the context, can, I think, help feeing that the Rev. Mr. Toplady, who, if I remember right, quotes this text against us, mistakes Solomon, as much as Mr. Hill does St. John. The meaning is evidently, that there is no man who is not liable to fin; and that a man actually fins, when he actually departs from God. Now peccability, or a liableness to fin is not indwelling fin; for angels, Adam, and Eve, were all liable to fin in their finles state. And, that there are fome men who do not actually fin is indubitable; (1) From the hypothetical phrase in the context, IF THEY SIN, which shows that their finning is not unavoidable: - (2) From God's ANGER against those that fin, which is immediately mentioned, Hence it appears, that so certain as God is not ANGRY WITH ALL his people, some of them no NOT

If Mr. Hill confults the original, he will find that the word translated SINNETH, is in the future tense, which is often used for an indefinite tense in the potential mood, because the hebrews have no such mood or tense. Therefore our translators would only have done justice to the original, as well as to the context, if they had rendered the whole clause, There is no man that MIGHT NOT SIN; instead of There is no man that SIN-WETH NOT.

NOT SIN in the fense of the wife man :- And fall From Solomon's intimating, that these very men, who have finned, or have actually departed from God, may BETHINK themjelves, REPENT, and RE-TURN to God with ALL THEIR HEART, and with ALL THEIR SOUL, that is, may attain the perfection of their dispensation; the two poles not being more opposed to each other, than finning is to repenting; and departing from God, to returning to him with ALL our beart and with ALL our joul. Take therefore the whole patfage together, and you have a demonstration, that where for bath abounded, there grace may much more abound. And what is this, but a demonstration that our doctrine is not chimerical? For if jews [Solomon himfelt being judge] instead of funing and departing from God, can repent, and return to him WITH ALL THEIR HEARTS; how much more christians, whose privileges are so much greater!

II. " But Solomon fays alfo, There is not a user man upon earth, that does good and SINNETH

" NOT, Eccl. vii. 20."

(1) We are not fure that Solomon fays it: For he may introduce here the very fame man who, four verses before, says, Be not righteous overmuch. &c. and Mr. Toplady may mistake the interlocutor's meaning in one text, as Dr. Trap has done in the other.—But (2) Supposing Solomon speaks, May not he in general affert what St. Paul does, Rom. iii. 23, All bave funed, and come fort of the glory of God, the just not excepted? Is not this the very fense which Canne, Calvinist as he was, gives to the wife man's words, when he refers the reader to this affertion of the apostle? And did we ever speak against this true doctrine?-(3) If you take the original word To SIN, in the lowest sense, which it bears :- If it means in Eccl. vii. 20, what it does in Jud. xx. 16, namely to Miss a mark, we shall not differ: for we maintain, that according to the flandard of paradifaical perfection, There is not a just man upon earth, that does good, and miffes not the mark

of that perfection, i. e. that does not lessen the good he does, by some involuntary, and therefore sevangelically speaking sinless deser.—(4) It is bold to pretend to overthrow the glorious liberty of God's children, which is afferted in an hundred plain passages of the new testament, by producing so vague a text as Eccl. vii. 20. And to measure the spiritual attainments of all believers, in all ages, by this obscure standard, appears to us as ridiculous as to affirm, that of a thousand believing men, 999 are indubitably villains; and that of a thousand christian women, there is not one but is a strumpet; because Solomon says a few lines below, One Manamong a thousand bave I found; but a woman among a thousand bave I found; but a woman among all those bave I not found, Eccl. viii. 28.

III. If it be objected, that "Solomon asks, Who can say, I have my beart clean, I am pure from

" my fin? Prov. xx. 9:" We answer:

(1) Does not Solomon's Father ask, Who shall divid in thy holy bill? Does a question of that nature always imply an absurdity, or an impossibility? Might not Solomon's query be evangelically answered thus? The man in whom thy Father David's prayer is answered, Create in me a clean heart, O God:—The man who has regarded St. James's direction to the primitive folisidians, Cleanse your hearts, ye double-minded:—The man who has obeyed God's awful command, O Jerusalem, wash thy heart from iniquity, that then mayes be saved.—Or the man who is interested in the fixth beatitude, Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God:—That man, I say, can testify to the honour of the blood which cleanseth from All sin; that he has his heart clean.

(2) However if Solomon, as it is most probable, reproves in this passage the conceit of a perfect, boasting pharisee, the answer is obvious: No MAN of THAT stamp can say with any truth, I bave my bear; clean; for the law of faith excludes all proud boasting,

boasting, and if we say with the temper of the pharisee, THAT WE HAVE NO SIN, we decive ourselves, and the truth is not in us; for we have pride, and pharisaic pride too, which, in the fight of God, is perhaps the greatest of all fins.—If our opponents take the wise man's question in either or the preceding, scriptural fenses, they will find that it perfectly agrees with the doctrine of jewish and christian perfection.

IV. Solomon's pretended testimony against christian perfection is frequently backed by two of Isaiah's sayings considered out of the context, one of which respects the filtiness of our restroujness; and the other, the uncleanness of our life. I have already proved [Check IV. Let. viii.] that the righteousness which Isaiah compares to filterages, and St. Paul to dung, is only the anti-evangelical, pharisaic righteousness of unhumbled protessors; a righteousness this, which may be called the righteousness of impenitent pride, rather than the righteousness of humble faith: Therefore the excellence of the righteousness of faith cannot, with any propriety be struck at by that passage.

V. "But Ifaiab, undoubtedly speaking of himfelf, says, Woe is me, for I am undone, because I am a man of unchean life. If. vi. 5."

True: But give-yourself the trouble to read the two sollowing verses, and you will hear him declare that the power of God's spirit applying the blood of sprinkling [which power was represented by a live coal taken from of the altar] touched his lips; so that his iniquity was taken away, and his sin purged. This passage therefore, when it is considered with the context, instead of disproving the doctrine of christian perfection, strongly proves the doctrine of jewish perfection.

If *Haiab* is discharged from the service into which he is so unwarrantably pressed, from the land of Uzeras opponents will bring Jos, whom the Lord M 3,

himself pronounces perfect according to his dispenfation; notwithstanding the hard thoughts which his friends entertained of him.

VI. Perfect Job is absurdly fet upon demolishing christian perfection, because he says, If I postify MYSELF mine own mouth shall condemn me; if I say [in a pharifaic, self-justifying spirit] I am perfect, it shall also prove me perversa, Job ix. 20 .-But (1) What does Job affert here, more than Solomon does in the words, to which Ganne on this. text judiciously refers his readers, Let another man. praise thee, and not thine own mouth: a stranger, and not thine own lips. Tho' even this rule is not without exception; witness the circumstances which drove St. Paul to what he calls a confidence of boofting. - (2) That professing the perfection of our difpensation in a felf-abasing and Christ-exalting spirit, is not a proof of perverfenels, is evident from the profession which humble Paul made of his being one of the perfect christians of his time, Phil. iii. 15. and from St. John's declaration, that his love was made perfect, John iv. 17. For when we have the witnessing spirit, whereby we know the things which are freely given to us of God, we may, nay at proper times, we should acknowledge his gifts to bis glory, tho not to our own .- (3) If God himself had pronounced Job perfest according to his dispensation, Job's modest fear of pronouncing himself so, does not at all overthrow the divine testimony: Such a timourousness only shows, that the more we are advanced in grace, the more we are averse to whatever has the appearance of oftentation; and the more deeply we feel what Job felt when he mid, Bebold, I Am VILE: What Shall I answer thee? I will lay my band upon my mouth. Job, xl. 4.

VII. "But Job himself, far from mentioning his persection, says, Now mine eye seeth thee, I have Abhor Myself, and Repent in dust and ashes."—And does this disprove our doctrine? Do we not affert that our persection admits of.

of a continual growth; and that perfect repentance, and perfect bumility, are effential parts of it? These words of Job therefore, far from overthrowing our doctrine, prove that the patient man's perfection grew; and that from the top of the perfection of gentilism, he faw the day of christian perfection, and had a taste of what Mr. Wester prays for, when he fings,

O let me gain perfection's beight, &c. Confound, o'erpow'r me with thy grace; I would be by myfelf ABHORR'D; All might, all majesty, all praise, All glory be to Christ my Lord!

VIII. With respect to these words, The stars are not pure—the heavens are not clean in his sight:—His angels be charged with folly, Joh xxiii. 5.—iv. 18. we must consider them as a proof that absolute persection belongs to God alone; A truth this, which we inculcate as well as our opponents. Besides, if such passages overthrew the doctrine of persection, they would principally overthrow the doctrine of angelical persection, which Mr. Hill: holds as well as we. To conclude:

IX. When JoB asks, What is man, that be fould be CLEAN? How can be be CLEAN, that is born of a woman? -W bo can bring a CLEAN thing out of an unclean? And when he answers, Not one; he means not one, who falls thort of infinite power. If he excluded Emmanuel, God with us, I would directly point at him who faid, I will, Be theuclean; and at the believers who declare, We can do all things thro' Christ that strengtheneth us, and accordingly CLEANSE themselves from ALL filebine of the flesh and spirit, that they may be found of him WITHOUT SPOT and BLAMELESS. Yes, I would point at the poor leper, who has faith enough to fay, Lord, if thou will, THOU CANST make me clean. They tell me, that my leprofy must cleave to me till death batter down this tenement of

elay; but faith speaks a different language:
Only say the word, BE THOU CLEAN, and I shall

be cleansed:—Purge me with bysop, Sprinkle clean voicer upon me, and I shall be clean from ALL my

filtbinefs.

If these remarks are just, does it not appear, that it is as absurd to stab christian perfection thro' the sides of Job, Isaiab, and Solomon; as to set Peter, Paul, James, and John, upon "cutting it up root and branch?"

SECTION XII.

Containing a variety of arguments, to prove the ABSUR-DETY of the twin doct ines of CHRISTIAN IMPER-FECTION and a DEATH-PURGATORY.

I HAVE hitherto stood chiefly upon the defensive, by showing that Mr. Hill has no ground to infinuate, that our Church, and Peter, Paul, James and John, are defenders of the twin-doctrines of christian impersection and a death-purgatory. I shall now attack these doctrines by a variety of arguments, which, I hope, will recommend themselves to the candid reader's conscience and reason.

If I wanted to encounter Mr. Hill with a brokenreed, and not with the weapons of a protestant,
Reason and Scripture, I would retort here the grands
argument by which he attempts to cut down our
doctrines of free-agency and cordial-obedience: "The
generality of the carnal clergy is for you, therefore
your doctrines are false:" If this argument is good,
is not that which follows better still: "The generality of bad men is for your doctrine of ctristian
impersection; therefore that doctrine is salse; for is
it were true, wicked people would not so readily
embrace it." But as I see no solidity in an argument by which I could disprove the very being of

a God (for the generality of wicked men believe there is a supreme Being) I discard it, and begin with one, which I hope is not unworthy of the reader's attention.

I. Does not St. Paul infinuate, that no foul goes to heaven without perfection, where he calls the bleffed fouls that wait for an happy refurrection, were data fixator retexesureror, the spirits of just MEN MADE PERFECT, and not TETELESwhere Trevhate Sixains, the PERFECTED SPIRITS of just men? Heb. xii. 23. Does not this mode of expression denote a perfection which they attained while they were MEN, and before they commenced separate spirits, that is before death? Can any one go to an boly and just God, without being first made just and boly? Does not the Aposts fay, that the unrighteous, or unjust, Shall not inberit the kingdom of God? and that without beliness no man Shall fee the Lord? Must not this holines, of whatfoever degree it is, be free from every mixture of unrighteousness? If a man has at death the least degree of any unrighteous and defiling mixture in his foul, must he not go to some purgatory, or to hell? Can he go to heaven, if NOTHING that defileth Shall enter the new Jerufalem? And if at death his righteous disposition is free from every unrighteous, immoral mixture, is he not a just man perfected on EARTH, according to the dispensation he is under?

II. IF CHRIST takes away the outward pollution of believers, while he absolutely leaves their hearts full of inducelling sin in this life; why did he find fault with the pharisees for cleansing the outside of the cup and platter, whilst they lest the inside full of all corruption? If God says, My son, give me the NEART; if he requires truth in the INWARD PARTS, and complains, that the JEWS drew near to him with their lips, when their bearts were far from him; is it not strange, he should be willing that the heart of his most peculiar people, the heart of CHRISTIANS, should necessarily remain unclean during

the term of life?—Besides, Is there any other gospel-way of fully cleaning the lips and bands, but by throughly cleaning the beart? And is not a cleaning so far pharifaical, as it is beartles?—Once more: If Christ has assured us, that Blessed are the fure in heart, and that If the Son shall make us free, we shall be free indeed, does it not behave our opponents to prove, that a believer has a pure beart, who is full of indwelling corruption; and that a man is free indeed, who is still sold under inbred sin?

III. WHEN our Lord has bound the indwelling man of fin, the firong man armed, can he not cast bim out?-When he cast out devils, and unclean spirits with a word, did he call Death to his affiliance? Did he not radically perform the wonderful cure, to show his readiness and ability radically to cure those, whose hearts are possessed by indwelling iniquity, that curfed fin whose name is legion?-When the legion of expelled fiends entered into the favine, the poor brutes were delivered from their infernal guests, by being choaked in the jea. DEATH therefore cured them, not Christ. And can we have no cure but that of the fwipe? No deliverance from indwelling fin, but in the arms of death?-If this is the case, go, drown your plaguing corruptions in the first pond you will meet with, ye poor mourners, who are more weary of your life, because of indwelling fin, than Rebecca was because of the daughters of Heth.

IV. How does the notion of fin, necessarily dwelling in the heart of the most advanced christians, agree with the full tenor of the new covenant, which runs thus, I will put my laws in their minds, and write them in their hearts:—The law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus shall make them free from the law of sin and death? If the laws of perfect love to God and man are fully put in the heart of a believer, according to the full tenor of Christ's gospel, what room remains for the hellish statutes of Satan? Does

mot the Lord cleanse the believer's heart, as he writes the law of love there? And when that law is subolly written by the spirit, the finger of God, which applies the all-cleansing blood, is not the heart subolly cleansed? When God completely gives the beart of flesh, does he not completely take away the heart of flone? Is not the heart of flone the very rock, in which the serpent, indwelling sin, lurks? And will God take away that curied rock, and spare the venemous viper that breeds in its cleats?

V. CANNOT the little leaven of fincerity and truth, leaven the whole heart? But can this be done without purging out entirely the old leaven of malice and wickedness? May not a father in Christ be as free from fin, as one, who is totally given up to a reprobate mind, is free from righteoujness?-Is not the glorious liberty of God's children, the very reverle of the total and conflant flavery to fin, in which the strongest sons of Belial LIVE and die?-If a full admittance of Satan's temptation could redically destroy original RIGHTEOUSNESS, in the hearts of our first parents; why cannot a full admittance of Christ's gospel radically destroy original UNRIGH-TEOUSNESS in the hearts of believers ?- Does not the gospel promise us, that evbere fin bas abounded, grace shall MUCH MORE ABOUND? And did not fin so abound once, as entirely to sweep away inward boliness BEFORE DEATH? But how does grace abound much more than fin, if it never can entirely fweep away inward for without the help of DEATH?

VI, Is there not a present, CLEANSING power, as well as a present, ATONING efficacy, in the Redeemer's blood? Have we not already taken notice, that the same scripture, which informs us, that if we confess our sins, be is FAITHFUL and JUST to FORGIVE us our sins, declares also that, upon the same gracious terms, be is faithful and just to CLEANSE US from ALL unrighteousness? Now, if the saithful and just God is ready to forgive ropay a poor mourner who sincerely contesses his guilt;

guilt; and if it would be doing divine faithfulness and justice great dishonour to say, that God WILL NOT FORGIVE a weeping penitent before the article of death; is it doing those divine perfections honour to assert, that God WILL NOT CLEANSE before death a believer, who humbly confesses and deeply laments the remains of sin? Why should not God display his FAITHFULNESS and JUSTICE in cleansing us now from inbred sin, as well as in forgiving us now our actual iniquities; if we now comply with the gracious terms, to the performance of which, this double blessing is annexed in the gospel-charter?

VII. It our opponents allow, that faith and love may be made perfect two or three minutes before death, they give up the point. Death is no longer absolutely necessary to the destruction of unbelief and sin: For if the evil beart of unbelief departing from the living God may be taken away, and the completely bonest and good beart given two or three minutes before death; we defire to know, why this change might not take place two or three bours—two or three weeks—two or three years, before that awful moment?

VIII. IT IS, I think, allowed on all fides, that we are faved, that is, fanctified as well as jus-Now that particular height of tified by faith. fanctification, that full circumcifion of the beart, which centrally purifies the foul, fprings from a peculiar degree of faving faith, and from a particular operation of the Spirit of burning :- a quick operation this, which is compared to a baptism of fire, and proves fometimes fo sharp and fearthing, that it is as much as an healthy, strong man can do to bear up under it. It feems therefore abfurd to suppose, that God's infinite wisdom has tied this powerful operation to the article of death, that is, to a time when people, thro' delirium or excessive weakness, are frequently unable to think, or to bearthe feeble operation of a little wine and water.

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IX. WHEN our Lord fays, Make the tree Good and its fruit GOOD :-- A GOOD man out of the GOOD treasure of bis beart bringeth forth GOOD things; does he suppose that the heart of his faithful people must always remain fraught with indwelling fin? Is indwelling fin a GOOD treasure? Or does Christ any where plead for the necessary indwelling of a bad treasure in a good man? When the Spoule is all glorious within; when her eye is fingle, and her subole body full of light; how can she be still full of darkness, and inbred iniquity? And when St. Paul observes, that established christians are full of goodness, Rom. xv. 14, who can think he means, that are they full of beart-corruption, and (what is worse still) that they must continue so to their dying day ?

X. If christian perfection is nothing but the depen of evangelical repentance, the full affurance of faith, and the pure love of God and man, fled abroad in a faithful believer's heart by the Holy Ghost given unto him, to cleanse him, and to keep him clean from all filtbiness of the flesh and fire; and to enable him to fulfil the law of Christ, according to the talents he is entrusted with, and the circumstances in which he is placed in THIS world: -If this, I fay, is christian perfection, nothing can be more abfurd than to put off the attaining of it till we die and go to heaven. This is evident from the descriptions of christian persection which we find in the new testament. The first is our Lord's account in the beatitudes. For how can holy mourning be perfected in heaven, where there will be nothing but perfect joy? - Will not the loving disposition of Peace-makers ripen too late for the church, if it ripens only IN HEAVEN, where there will be no peace-breakers; or IN THE AR-TICLE OF DEATH, when people lofe their fenfes. and are utterly disabled from acting a reconciler's part ?- Ye, that are perfecuted for righteoufnefs fake, will ye flay till you are among the bleffed, to regoice in tribulation? Will the bleffed revile you, and

fay all manner of evil of you fally, to give you an opportunity of being exceeding glad, when you are counted worthy to suffer for Christ's name?—And ye, double-minded christians, will ye tarry for the blessedness of the pure in beart till ye come to heaven? Have ye forgot that heaven is no purgatory; but a glorious reward for those who ARE pure in beart;—for those who have purified themselves, even as God is pure?

XI. From the beatitudes our Lord passes to PRE-CEPTS descriptive of christian perfection reduced to practice. If thy brother bath ought against thee, go THY WAY, and be reconciled to him.—Agree QUICKLY with thine adversary.- RESIST NOT evil. -TURN THE LEFT CHEEK to bim that fmites thee. on the right.—Give alms so as not to let thy left hand KNOW what thy right hand does .- Fast evangelically. -Lay not up treasures upon carth .- Take no fanxious | thought subat you shall eat .- BLESS them that CURSE YOU .- Do GOOD to them that HATE YOU, that ye may be the children of your Father who is in beaven; for be maketh bis fun to Shine on the just, and on the UNJUST. Be ye PERFECT, as your Father who is in beaven is PERFECT. What attentive reader does not fee, that none of these branches of a christian's practical perfection can grow in the article of death; and that, to suppose they can flourish in heaven, is to suppose that Christ says, "Be thus and thus perfect, when it will be abso-. " lutely impossible for you to be thus and thus per-" fect? Love your ENEMIES, when all will be " your friends: Do good to them that HATE you, " when all will flame with love towards you? " Turn your cheek to the smiters, when the cold hand of death will disable you from moving a " finger; or, when God shall have fixed a great " gulpb between the smiter, and you?"

XII. The same observation holds with respect to that important branch of christian persection, which we call PERFECT SELF-DENIAL. If thine eye offend offend thee, fays our Lord, pluck it out:—If the right hand offend thee, cut it off, &c. Now can any thing be more abfurd, than to put off the perfect performance of these severe duties, till we DIE, and totally lose our power over our eyes and hands? Or, till we arrive at HEAVEN, where nothing that offendeth can possibly be admitted?

XIII. ST. LUKE gives us in the Ads, a fketch of the perfection of christians living in community. The multitude of them that believed, fays he, were of ONE HEART and of ONE SOUL. They continued flee fastly in the apostles doctrine, and in prayers .- They bad all things common; parting their poffessions to all, as every man bad need :- Neither faid any of them that ought of the things which be possessed was his own; And continuing daily in the temple, and breaking bread from bouse to bouse, they ate their meat with gladness and fingleness of beart, praising God, When I read this description of the practical perfection of a chriftian church, I am tempted to finile at the mistake of our opponents, and to ask them, if we can EAT OUR MEAT with gladness in the article of death; or SELL OUR POSSESSIONS for the relief of our brethren on EARTH, when we are gone to HEAVEN?

XIV. Consider we some of St. Paul's exhortations to the display of the perfection which we contend for, and we shall see in a still stronger light the absurdity which I point out. He says to the Romans: Present your bodies a living sacrifice;—and be not conformed to this present world,—that ye may prove what is that perfect will of God.—Having different gifts, use them all for God: exhorting with diligence, giving with simplicity, shaving mercy with chearfulness, not slothful in business, servent in spirit, serving the Lord, communicating to the necessities of the saints, given to be spitality, weeping with them that weep, being of the same mind, condescending to men of low estate, providing things bonest in the sight of all men, beaping coals of sire,—coals of burning love

and melting kindness, on the head of your enemy by giving him meat, if be is bungry; or drink, if be is thirfly; overcoming thus evil with good.-Again; Exhorting the CORINTHIANS to christian perfection, he fays: Brethren, the time is short, -I would bave you without carefulness: It remaineth that they who have wives, be as if they had none; they that weep, as if they wept not; they that rejoice, as if they rejoiced not; they that buy as if they possessed not; and they that use this world, as not abusing it, &c .-Once more: Stirring up the PHILIPPIANS to the perfection of humble love, he writes, Fulfil ye my joy, that ye THINK TIE SAME thing, have the fame love; being of one soul, of one MIND. Do NO-THING thro wain glory, but in lowliness of mind BSTEEM each the others BETTER THAN THEMSELVES. Look not every one on his own things, but every one also on the things of others : Let this mind be IN YOU, which was also IN CHRIST JESUS, who bumbled bimfelf and became obedient EVEN UNTO DEATH .- Now all these descriptions of the practical part of christian perfection, in the very nature of things cannot be confined to the article of death, much lefs to our arrival at heaven. For when we are dying. or dead, we cannot present our bodies a living facrifice; -we cannot use this world as not abusing it; inor can we look at the things of others, as well as at our own.

XV. The same thing may be said of St. Paul's sine description of christian persection under the name of charity. Charity suffereth LONG: But at death all our sufferings are cut short. Charity is not provoked; It thinketh no evil: It covereth all things: It rejoiceth not in iniquity; It hopeth all things, believeth all things, endureth all things, &c. The bare reading of this description shows, that it does not respect the article of death, when we cease to endure any thing; much less does it respect heaven, where we shall have absolutely nothing to endure.

XVI.

XVI. If a perfect fulfilling of our relative duties is a most important part of christian perfection, how ungenerous, how foolish is it to promise the simple. that they shall be perfect christians AT DEATH, or IN HEAVEN! Does not this affertion include all the following absurdities: Ye shall perfectly love your husbands and wives in the article of DEATH. when you shall not be able to distinguish your husbands and wives from other men and women : or in HEAVEN, where ye Shall be like the angels of of God, and have neither husbands nor wives:-Ye shall affist your parents and instruct your children with perfect tenderness, when ye shall be past affilting or instructing them at all :-- when they shall be in heaven or in hell-past needing, or past admitting your affiltance and instructions.-Ye shall inspect your servants with perfect love, or serve your masters with perfect faithfulness when the relations of master and servant will exist no more. - Ye shall perfectly bear with the infirmities of your weak brethren, when ye shall leave all your weak brethren behind, and go where all your brethren will be free from every degree of trying weakness.— Ye shall entertain strangers, attend the sick, and visit the prisoners with perfect love, when ye shall give up the ghost, or when ye shall be in paradife. where these duties have no more place than lazarhouses, sick-bees, prisons and gallows.

AVII. DEATH, far from introlucing imperfect christians into the state of christian perfection, will take them out of the very possibility of ever attaining it. This will appear indubitable, if we remember, that christian perfection consists in perfect repentance, perfect saith, perfect hope, perfect love of an INVISIBLE God, perfect charity for VISIBLE enemies, perfect patience in pain, and perfect refignation under losses;—in a constant bridling of our bodily appetites, in an assiduous keeping of our senses, in a chearful taking up of our cross, in a resolute following of Christ without the camp, and in a deliberate choice to suffer assistance with the people of God,

pather than to enjoy, the pleasures of fin for a season. Now, so certain, as there can be no perfect repentance in the graves no christian faith where all is fight, no perfect hope where all is enjoyment, no pertect love of an invifible God or of vifible enemies. where God is vifible and enemies are invifible: no bearing pain with perfed patience, when pain is no. no more; and no fuffering affliction with the people of God, where no hadow of affliction lights upon the people of God, &c .- So certain, I fay, as death incapacitates us for all their christian duties, it incapacitates us also for every branch of christian perfection. Mr. Hill might then as well perfuade the fimple, that they shall become perfect furgeons. and perfect midwives-perfect masons and perfect gardeners in the grave, or beyond it; as to perfuade them, that they shall become perfect penitents and perfed believers in the article of death, or in the new Jerusalem.

XVIII. From the preceding argument it follows: that the graces of repentance, faith, hope, and christian charity, or love for an invisible God, for trying friends, and for visible enemies, must be perfected bere or never. If Mr. Hill grants that these graces are, or may be perfected bere, he allows all that we contend for. And if he afferts, that they shall never be perfected, because there is " no. perfection bere," and because the perfection of repentauce, &c. can have no more place in heaven than finning and mourning, I alk; What becomes them of the scriptures, which Mr. Hill is o ready to produce, when he defends calvinian perseverance? As for God, his work is PERFECT .- Bring confident of this very thing, that be, who bath begun a good work: in you [who have always obeyed, Phil. ii. 12.] will perform, or [entreasers] will PERFECT it [if you continue to obey.]-The Lord will PERFECT what concerneth me. - Praying exceedingly that we [as work-. ers together with God] might PERFECT that which is lacking in your FAITH .- Looking unto Jesus, the author and [TEXELETTE] the PERFECTER of our faith :

for he is faithful that promised. How can the Lond be faithful, and yet never perfect the repentance and faith of his obedient people? Will he fow fuch a bleffed feed as that of faith, hope, and love to our enemies, and never let a grain of it either mifcarry or bring forth fruit to perfection? Is not this a flat contradiction? How can a pregnant woman accer miscarry, and yet never bring forth the fruit of her womb to any persection! Such however is the inconfiftency which Mr. Hill obtrudes upon us as gofpel. If his doctrine of calvinian perseverance is true, no believer can mifearry; -no grain of true faith can fail of producing fruit to perfection : And if his doctrine of christian imperfection is true, no believer can be pertect: no grain of faith, repentance, hope, and love for our hufbands and wives, can possibly grow to perfection. How different is this doctrine from that of our Lord, who, in the parable of the fower, represents all those who do not bear fruit to perfection, as misearrying professors!

XIX. IF impatience was that bodily diforder. which is commonly called the beart-burn ; -if obfinacy was a crick in the neck; -pride, an imposthume in the breaft; -raging anger, a fit of the tooth ach ;-vanity, the dropfy ;-d fobedience, a bodily lamenes; - uncharitableness, the rheumarism ; -and despair, a broken bone; there would be fome fenfe in the doctrine of christian imperfection, and reason could subseribe to Mr. Hill's creed: For it is certain, that DEATH effectually cures the heart-burn, a crick in the neck, the tooth-ach, &c. But what real affinity have moral diforders with bodily death? And why do our opponents think, we maintain a " shocking" doctrine, when we affert, that death has no more power to cure our pride, than old age to remove our covetouineis? Nay, do we not see that the most decrepit old age does not cure men even from the groffest lusts of the carnal mind? When old drunkards and fornicators are as unable to indulge their fenfual appetites, as it they actually ranked among corpfes, do they noe

betray the same inclinations which they showed, when the strong tide of their youthful blood joined with the rapid stream of their vicious habits? Is not this a demonstration, that no decay of the body, not not that complete decay, which we call Death, has any necessary tendency to alter our moral habits? and do not the ancients set their seal to this observation? Does not Solomon say, that In the place where the tree falleth, there it shall be? And has Mr. Hill forgotten those remarkable lines of Virgil?

Quæ cura nitentes
Pascere equos, eadem sequitur tellure repostos?

"Disembodied souls have in the world of spirits, the very same dispositions and propensities which

" they had, when they dwelt in the body."

XX. IF God had appointed Death to make and end of heart-pollution, and to be our complete faviour from fin, our opponents might screen their doctrine of a Death-purgatory behind God's appointment; it being certain that God, who can command iron to fwim, and fire to cool, could also command the filthy hands of death to cleanse the thoughts of our hearts. But we do not read in our bible either that God ever gave to indwelling fin a leafe of any believer's heart for life; or that he ever appointed the king of terrors to deliver us from the deadly feeds of iniquity. And altho' the old testament contains an account of many carnal ordinances adapted to the carnal disposition of the jews, we do not remember: to have read there, DEATH Shall circumcife thy beart, that thou mayft love the Lord thy God with all thy beart .- DEATH will Sprinkle clean water, upon your and ye shall be clean: From all your filtbiness DEATH. will cleanse you; DEATH will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and [when you: are dead] ye shall keep my judgments and do them. And if death was never so far honoured under the mosaic dispensation, we ask, where he has been inwelled with higher privileges under the gospel of Christ ?

Christ? where St. Paul fays, that Christ bath abolifbed DEATH, and bath brought LIFE and immortality to light thro' the yofpel? It appears to us, that it is an high degree of rashness in the Calvinists, and in the Romanists, to appoint the pangs of death, and the forrows of hell to do the most difficult, and of confequence the most glorious work of Christ's spirit, which is powerfully to redeem as from all iniquity, and to purity unto bimfelf a peculiar people [not full of all inbred unrighteousness, but dead to fin, free from fin, pure in beart, and] zealous of good works. And we should think ourselves far more guilty of impertinence, if we nominated either Death or Hell to do the office of the FINAL PURIFIER of our bearts; than if we ordered a fexton to do the office of the prime minister, or an executioner to act as the king's physician.-With respect to falvation from the root, as well as from the branches of fin, we will therefore know nothing, as absolutely necessary, but Jesus Christ and bim crucified, rifen again, and afcended on high, that he might fend the Holy Ghost to perfect us in love. thro' a faith that purifies the beart, and thro' a bose. which if any man bath, be will purify bimfelf even as God is pure.

XXI. To conclude: if christian perfection implies the perfect use of the whole armour of God, what can be more absurd than the thought, that we shall be made perfect christians in heaven or at death? How will Mr. Hill prove that we shall perseally use the helmet of hope, perseally wield the shield of faith, and perseally quench the siery darts of the devil in heaven, where faith, hope, and the devil's darts shall never enter?—Or, how will he demonstrate, that a soldier shall persectly go thro' his exercise in the article of death, that is, in the very moment he leaves the army, and for ever puts off the harness?

Mr. Baxter wrote in the last century a vindication of holiness, which he calls A SAINT or a ERUTE: The title is bold; but all that can be faid to defend iniquity cannot make me think it too strong: So many are the arguments by which the scriptures recommend an holy life. And I own to thee, Reader, that when I consider all that can be said in defence of christian perfection, and all the ABSURDITIES which clog the doctrine of christian imperfection, I am inclined to imitate Mr. Baxter's positiveness, and to call this Essay, A Perfect Christian in this world, or a perfect Dupe in the NEXT.

SECTION XIII.

Containing (1) A variety of arguments to prove the MICHIEVOUSNESS of the doctrines of CHRISTIAN IMPERFECTION: And (2) A review of the most decent and plausible arguments, by which the imperfectionists in sinuate the doctrine of a DEATH-PURGATORY.

I. THE Arguments of the preceding fection are produced to shew the ABSURDITY of Mr. Hill's doctrine of christian imperfection: Those which follow are intended to prove the MISCHIE-VOUSNESS of that modify tenet.

I. It strikes at the doctrine of salvation by faith. By grace are ye saved thro' faith, not only from the guilt and outward acts of sin, but also from its root and secret buds: Not of § works, says the apostle, left

[§] Here, and in some other places, St. Paul by WORKS means only the deeds of a Christless, anti-mediatorial law, and the obedience paid to the jewish covenant which is frequently called the law, in opposition to the christian covenant, which is commonly called the gospel, i. e. the gospel of Christ, because Christ's

left any man should [pharifaically] boaft: And may we not add, Not of DEATH, left be that bad the power of death, that is, the devil, should [abfurdly]. boaft? Does not what strikes at the doctrine of faith, and abridges the falvation which we obtain by it, equally strike at Christ's power and glory? Is it not the business of faith to receive Christ's faving word, to apprehend the power of his fanctifying spirit, and to inherit all the great promises. by which he faves his penitent, believing people FROM THEIR SINS? Is it not evident, that, if no believers can be faved from indwelling fin thre' faith, we must correct the apostle's doctrine, and fay, By grace ye are faved from the remains of fin . thro' DEATH? And can unprejudiced protestants admit fo Christ-debasing, so Death-exalting a tenet. without giving a dangerous blow to the genuine doctrines of the reformation?

II. It dishonours Christ as a Prophet, for as such he came to teach us to be now meek and lowly in HEART: but the imperfect gospel of the day teaches, that we must necessarily continue passionate and proud in beart till death; for pride and immoderate anger are, I apprehend, two main branches of indwelling sin. Again: My motto demonstrates that he publicly taught the multitudes the doctrine of perfection, and Mr. Hill infinuates that this doctrine is "shocking" not to say "blasphemous."

III. It difgraces Christ as the CAPTAIN OF OUR SALVATION. For St. Paul fays, that our Captain

Christ's gospel is the most excellent of all the gospel-dispensations. The apostle therefore, by the expression not of works, does by no means exclude from final salvation the law of faith, and the works done in obedience to that law: for in the preceding verse he secures the obedience of faith when he says, Te are saved, i. e. made partakers of the blessings of the christian dispensation by grace Thro' faith. Here then the word by grace secures the sirst gospel axiom, and the word Thro' faith secures the second.

Captain furnishes us with sucapons mighty thro' God to the pulling down of Satan's ftrong holds, and to the bringing of every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ. But our opponents represent the devil's strong holds as absolutely impregnable. No weapons of our warfare can pull down Apollyon's throne. Inbred fin shall maintain its place in man's heart till death strike the victorious blow. Christ may indeed fight against the Jericho within, as Joah fought against Rabbab of the children of Ammon: But then he must send for Death, as Jeab sent for David, faying, I have fought against Jericho, and have taken the city of waters: Now therefore, gather the rest of the people together, and encamp against the city, and take it, left I take the city, and it be called after my name. 2 Sam. xii. 26.

IV. It pours contempt upon him as the SURETY of the new covenant, in which God has engaged himself to deliver OBEDIENT believers from their enemies, that they may serve bim without [tormenting] fear all the days of their life; for how does he do his office in this respect, if he never sees, that such believers be delivered from their most oppressive and inveterate enemy, induelling sin? Or if that deliverance takes place only AT DEATH, how can they, in consequence of their death-freedom serve God without sear all the days of their life?

V. It affronts Christ as a KING, when it reprefents the believer's heart, which is Christ's spiritual throne, as being necessarily full of indwelling fm.—A spiritual rebel, who, notwithstanding the joint efforts of Christ and the believer, maintains his ground against them both during term of life? —Again: Does not a good king deliver his loyal subjects from oppression, and avenge them of a tyrannical adversary, when they cry to him in their distress? But does our Lord show himself such a king, if he never avenges them, or turns the usurper, the murderer sin out of their breast? -Once more; If our deliverance from fin depends upon the tiroke of death, and not upon a stroke of Christ's grace, might we not call upon the king of terrors, as well as upon the king of faints, for deliverance from the remains of fin? But where is the difference between faying, O Death, belp as, and crying, O Baal, save us?

VI. It injures Christ as a Response of pure spiritual worship in God's spiritual temple—the sheart of man? For it indirectly represents him as a pharisaic Saviour, who made much ado about driving with a whip harmless sheep and oxen out of his Father's material temple; but gives sull leave to Satan, not only to bring sheep and doves into the believer's heart but also to harbour and breed there during term of life the swelling toad spride and the hissing viper [envy:] to say nothing of the greedy dog [avarice,] and the filthy swine [impurity;] under pretence of "exercising the patience and engaging the industry" of the worshippers, if we may believe the Calvin of the day. See the Argument against christian Persection at the end of this section.

VII. It infults Christ as a Parest: For our Melchisedec shed his all-cleansing blood upon the cross, and now pours his all-availing prayer before the throne; asking that upon evangelical terms we may now be cleansed from all unrighteousness and perfected in one. But if we affert that believers let them be ever so faithful can never be thus cleansed and perfected in one till Death come to the Saviour's affistance, do we not place our Lord's cleansing blood, and powerful intercession and of consequence his priesthood in an unscriptural and contemptible light?

Should Mr. Hill attempt to retort this argument by faying "That it is our doctrine, not his, "which derogates from the honour of Christ's priesthood

priesthood, because we should no longer need our High-priest's blood if we were cleansed from

" all fin :" I reply :

(1) Perfect christians need as much the virtue of Christ's blood, to prevent the guilt and pollution of fin from returning, as imperfect christians want it to drive that guilt and pollution away. It is not enough that the blood of the true paschal lamb has been sprinkled upon our fouls to keep off the destroyer: it must still remain there to hinder his coming back with feven other spirits more wicked than bimfelf.—(2) Mr. Hill is in the dark: he calls for a light; and when it is brought, he obferves, the darkness of his room is now totally removed. Is it fo, Sir, replies his footman: Then you need these wax-candles no more: If they have totally removed the darkness of your apartment, you have no more need of them. Mr. Hill fmiles at the absurdity of his servant's argument; and yet, it is well if he does not admire the wifdom of my opponent's objection .- (3) The hearts of perfect christians are cleansed, and kept clean by faith; and christian perfection includes the perfection of christian faith, whose property it is to endear Christ and his blood more and more: Nothing then can be less reasonable than to say, that, upon our principles, perfect believers have done with the atoning blood. — (4) Such believers continually overcome the accuser of the bretbren thro the blood of the lamb: There is no moment therefore, in which they can spare it: They are feeble believers who can yet dispense with its constant application; and hence it is, that they continue feeble. None make fo much use of Christ's blood as perfect christians. Once it was ONLY their medicine, which they took now and then, when a fit of fear, or a pang of guilt, obliged them to it: But now it is the divine preservative, which keeps off the infection of fin. Now it is the reviving cordial, which they take to prevent their growing weary or faint in their minds: Now it is their daily drink; Now it is what they fprinkle

kle their every thought, word, and work with ! In a word it is that blood, which constantly feats before God and in their conscience, better the than the blood of Abel, and actually procures for them all the bleffings which they enjoy or expect. To fay therefore, that the doctrine of christian perfection supersedes the need of Christ's blood, is not less absurd than to affert that the perfection of navigation renders the great deep an useless refervoir of water .- Lastly: Are not the faints before the throne perfectly finles? And who is more ready than they to extol the blood and fing the fong of the Lamb: To him that loved us, and washed us from our fins in his own blood, be glory, &c? If an angel preached to them the modern gospel, and defired them to plead for the remains of fin, left they should lose their peculiar value for the atoning blood; would they not all fuspect him to be an angel of darkness, transforming himself into an angel of light? And shall we be the dupes of the Tempter, who deceives good men, that they may deceive us by a fimilar argument?

VIII. It discredits Christ as the FULTILLER of the Father's promise, and as the SENDER of the indwelling, abiding Comforter, that our joy may be full: For the Spirit never takes his constant abode as a Comforter in an heart full of indwelling fin. If he visits a finful heart with his consolations, it is only as a guest that tarrieth but a day. When he enters a soul traught with inbred corruption herather acts as a Reprover than as a Comforter; throwing down the tables of the spiritual money-changers; hindering the vessels which are not holiness unto the Lord from being carried thro' God's spiritual temple, and expelling, according to the degree of our faith whatsoever would make God's house a den of thieves.

But instead of this Mr. Hill's doctrine confiders the heart of believers as a den of liens; and represents Christ's spirit not as the destroyer,

but as the Keeper of the wild beafts and evil tempers which dwell in our breafts. This I conclude from these words of the Rev. Mr. Foplady,-"They [indwelling fin and unholy tempers] do " not quite expire, till the renewed foul is taken " up from earth to heaven. In the mean time " these hated remains of depravity will, too " often, like prisoners in a dungeon, crawl to-" wards the window (tho' in chains) and show "themselves thro' the grate. Nay, I don't know, " whether the strivings of inherent corruption for " mastery, be not, frequently, more violent in a " regenerate person, than even in one who is dead in trespasses: as wild beasts are, sometimes the " more rampant and furious for being wounded." See Caveat against UNSOUND doctrines. page 54.-When I read this gospel, I cannot but throw in a Caveat against Mr. Toplady's Caveat. For if his is not unfound; every body must allow it to be uncomfortable and unjafe. Who would not think it dreadfully dangerous to dwell with one wild beaft that cannot be killed, unless we are first killed ourselves? But how much more dangerous is it to be condemn'd to dwell for life with a parcel of them, which are not only immortal fo long as we are alive, but are jometimes the more rampant and furious for being wounded. The Saviour preached by Mr. Toplady only wounds the Egyptian Dragon, the inward Pharoah, and makes him rage, but our Jesus drowns him in the sea of his own blood, barely by stretching out the rod of his power, when we stretch out to him our arms of faith. Mr. Hill's Redeemer only takes Agag prisoner as double-minded Saul did; but our Redeemer bews him in pieces as upright Samuel. The Christ of the Calvinists says, "Confine the enemy; tho' he may possibly be fiercer than before." But our's thrusts out the enemy before us, and fuys, DESTROY. Deut. xxxiii, 27. O ye preachers of FINISHED fabration, we leave it to your candor to decide which of these doctrines brings most glory to the faving name of Jejus. And in the trick **的时代**产时间 IX. The

IX. The doctrine of our necessary continuance in indwelling fin to our last moments, makes us naturally overlook or despise the exceeding great and precious promifes given unto us, that by theje we might ! partakers of the divine nature [that is, of God's perfect bolines; baving escaped the corruption that is in the world thro' luft. 2 Pet. i. 4. And by that means it naturally defeats the full effect of evangelical truths and ministerial labours; an effect this, which is thus described by St. Paul: TEACHING every man in all wijdom, that we may present every man PERFECT in Christ Jesus, i. e. perfect according to the richest dispensation of divine grace, which is the goffel of Christ Jesus. Col. i, 28 .- Again, The scrip profitable for infruction in righteoufness, that the man of God may be PERFECT, throughly furnished unto all good works, 2 Tim. iii. 16. Now we apprehend that the perfection, which throughly furnishes believers unto all good works, is a perfection productive of all the good works which are [evangelically as well as providentially] prepared that we should walk in them BEFORE DEATH: Because [whatever Mr. Hill may infinuate to the contrary in England, and Father Walsh at Paris] the scripture says, Whatforeer thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is NO WORK nor device [in death, i. e.] in the grave whither thou goeft. For as the tree falls fo it lies : if it fall full of rottenness with a brood of vipers and a never-dying worm in its hollow center; it will continue in that very condition : and wo to the man, who trusts that the pangs of death will kill the worm, or that a purgative fire will spare the rotten wood and confume the vipers.

X. It defeats in part the end of the GOSPEL-PRE-EEPTS to the fulfilling of which gospel-promises are But a means. All the law, the prophets, and the apostolic writings, hang on these two commandments: "Thou shalt love God with ALL THY HEART, and thy neighbour As THY SELF, thro' penitential faith in the light of thy dispensation;" that is, in two-O 3. words, words. Thou halt be EVANGELICALLY PERFECT. Now if we believe, that it is absolutely impossible to be thus perfect by keeping these two blessed commandments in faith: we cannot but believe also that God who requires us to keep them is defective in wifdom, equity and goodness, byrequiring us to do what is absolutely impossible: And we represent our Church as a wicked step-mother which betrays all her children into the wanton commission of perjury, by requiring of every one of them in the facrament of baptism a most solemn vow by which they bind themselves in the presence of God and of the congregation, that they will keep God's holy will and commandments fi. e. that they will keep God's evangelical law and walk in the fame all the days of their life.

XI. It has a necessary tendency to unnerve our deepest prayers. How can we pray in faith, that God would help us to do his will on earth as it is done in beaven, or that he would cleanse the thoughts of our bearts that we may perfectly love him and avorthily magnify his boly name: - How can we, I fay, ask this in faith, if we disbelieve the very possibility of having these petitions answered? And what poor encouragement had Epaphras, upon the scheme which we oppose, AEWAYS to labour FERVENTLY for the Colossians in prayers, that they might stand PERFECT and COMPLETE in the will of God; or St. Paul, to wish that the very God of peace would fanctify the Thessalonians wholly, and that their whole spirit, and foul, and BODY, might be preserved BLAME-LESS, if these requests could not be granted before death, and were unavoidably to be granted to them and to all believers in the article of death?

XII. It foothes lukewarm, unholy professors, and encourages them to sit quietly under the vine of Sodom, and under their own barren sig-tree; I mean, under the baneful influence of their unbelief and indevelling sin; nothing being more pleasing to the

the carnal mind than this Syren-fong : " It is " absolutely impossible that the thoughts of your " hearts should be cleansed in this life. God him-" felf does not expect that you should be purified " from all iniquity on this fide the grave. It is " proper that fin should dwell in your heart by " unbelief, to endear Christ to you, and so to " work together for your good." The preachers of mere morality infinuate, that God does not forgive fins before death. This dangerous, uncomfortable doctrine damps the faith of penitents, who think it abfurd to expect BEFORE death what they are taught they can only receive AT death. And, as it is with the pardon of fins, fo it is also with the cleanfing from all unrighteousness. The preachers of christian imperfection tell their hearers, that no body can be cleanfed from beart-fin BEFORE DEATH. This new gospel makes them secretly trust in a deathpurgatory, and hinders them from pleading in faith the promife of full fanctification before death stares them in the face; while others, like spared Agag. madly venture upon the fpear of the king of terrors with their hearts full of indwelling fin. The dead tell no tales now, but it will be well if in the day of the refurrection, those who plead for the neces fary indwelling of fin during term of life, do not meet in the great day with some deluded souls; who will give them no thanks for betraying them. to their last moments, into the hands of indwellingfin, by infinuating, that there can be no deliverance from our evil tempers before we are ready to exchange a death-bed for a coffin.

XIII. It greatly discourages willing Israelites, and weakens the hands of the faithful spies, who want to lead seeble believers on, and to take by force the kingdom which consists in righteousness, peace and joy in the Hely Ghost; nothing being more proper to damp their ardor, than such a speech as this: "You may strive against your corruptions and evil tempers, as long as you please; but

et you shall never get rid of them: The Feriche " within is impregnable: it is fenced up to heawen, and garrison'd by the tall, invincible. immortal fons of Anak: So strong are these " adverfaries, that the twelve apostles, with the " help of Christ and of the Holy Ghost, could " never turn one of them out of his post. Nay. " they fo buffeted and overpowered St. Paul, the " most zealous of the apostles, that they fairly took "him prisoner, fold him under fin, and made him " groan to the last, O wretched, carnal man that I " am, who shall deliver me from the law of my " inbred corruptions, which bring me into captivity to the law of fin: I thank God thro' DEATH. So " then, with the flesh you must, as well as St. " Paul, serve the law of fin till you DIE. Nor " need you fret at these tidings; for they are the " pure Gospel of Christ-the genuine doctrines of " FREE grace, and christian LIBERTY. In Christ vou are free, but in yourselves you must continue " to ferve the law of fin: And indeed why should wou not do it, fince the fins of a christian are for bis good, and even the dung of a Sheep of Christ is " of some use—nay of the most excellent use if we believe Mr. Hill; for the most grievous falls-" falls into repeated acts of adultery and into deli-" berate murder, ferve to make us know our place, to drive us nearer to Christ, and to make us fing " louder the praises of restoring grace." Besides, that gentleman represents those who preach deliverance from indwelling fin before we go into a death purgatory as "men of a pharifaic cast-" blind men, who never faw their own hearts-" proud men, who oppose the righteousness of God, -vain men, who aspire at robbing Christ of " the glory of being ALONE without fin: in short, " men who hold doctrines which are flocking, not to say blasphemous."

How would this speech damp our desires after falvation from indwelling sin! How would it make us hug the curfed chains of our inbred corruptions;

which it holds out to public view without gospelfandals, was not sufficient to shock us back from this impure gospel to the pure gospel of Jesus Christ! And yet [if I am not mistaken] this dangerous speech only unfolds the scope of Mr. Hill's "Creed fir Perfectionists."

XIV. To conclude: The modifi doctrine of christian imperfection and death-purgatory, is fo contrived, that carnal men will always prefer the purgatory of the Calvinists to that of the Papists. For the Papifts prescribe I know not how many cups of divine wrath and dire vengeance, which are to be drunk by the fouls of the believers who die balf-purged, or three-parts cleanfed. Thefe balf-damn'd, or a quarter-damn'd creatures must go thro' a fevere discipline, and fiery falivation in the very fuburbs of hell, before they can be perfectly purified. But our opponents have found out a way to deliver balf-bearted believers out of all fear in this respect. Such believers need not utterly abolish the body of fin in this world. The inbred man of fin not only may, but he shall live as long as we do. You will possibly after "What is to be"come of this finful guest? Shall he take us to " hell, or shall we take him to heaven? If he " cannot die in this world, will Christ destroy " him in the next?" No: here Christ is almost left out of the question by those who pretend to be determined to know nothing but Christ and him crucified. Our indwelling adversary is not destroy'd by the brightness of the Redeemer's spiritual appearing, but by the gloom of the appearance of Death. Thus they have found another lefus—another Saviour from fin. The king of terrors comes to the affidance of Jeius's fanchiying grace and instantaneously delivers the carnal believer from indwelling pride, unbelief, covetoufness, peevifiness, uncharitableness, love of the world, and inordinate affection. Thus the clammy fweats brought on by the greedy monster, kill

(it feems) the tree of fin, of which the blood of Christ could only kill the buds! The dying finner's breath does the capital work of the Spirit of holiness! And by the most astonishing of all miracles, the faint, infectious, last gasp of a finful believer blows away in the twinkling of an eye the great mountain of inward corruption, which all the means of grace, all the faith, prayers, and facraments of twenty, perhaps of forty years; with all the love in the heart of our Zerubbabel, all the blood in his veins, all the power in his hands, and all the faithfulness in his breast, were never able to remove! If this doctrine is true, how greatly was St. Paul mistaken when he said, The sting of Death is fin, &c. Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory thro' Christ our Lord! Should he not have faid, Death is the CURE of fin, instead of faying, fin is the STING of Death? And should not his praises flow thus, Thanks be to God who gives us the victory thro' DEATH? our great and only Deliverer from our greatest and fiercest enemy, indwelling fin!

SECTION XIV.

An Answer to the arguments by which the Impersectionists support the doctrine of the necessary indwelling of sin in all believers till they go into the Death-purgatory.

THE pleasing effect of the lights in a picture, is considerably heightened by the bold opposition of strong shades. If the preceding arguments are the lights, by which we hope agreeably to strike the mental eyes of the reader, who candidly considers the doctrine of christian perfection; it will not be improper to heighten those lights by the amazing contrast of the arguments, which our opponents

opponents advance in defence of indivelling fin, and christian impersection. These arguments appear to us, shades,—bold, logical shades: but the bolder they are, the more they will set off the lustre of the truth which we recommend: for, if all things work for good to them that love God; why should not all the errors of others, work for good to them that love the truth? I am abundantly surnished with the erroneous shades I want, by three of the most approved authors, who support the ark of the impersect gospel, the rev. Mr. Toplady, author of the Historic Proof of Calvinism;—the rev. Mr. Martin, author of several tracts, which are esteem'd by the calvinists;—and the rev. Mr. Henry, famous for his voluminous exposition of the bible.

The first of these authors, in his Caveat against unsound doctrine, intimates that there never were on earth but three persons possessed of the finless-persection which we contend for; Adam, Eve, and Jesus Christ:—A bold intimation this, which, like the Babel I attack, has it's foundation in Consuson;—in the confusion of three persections which are entirely different;—the PARADISAICAL, finless persection of our first parents; the MEDIATORIAL, finless persection of Jesus Christ;—and the CHRISTIAN evangelically-sinless persection of St. John. This intimation is supported by some passages from Solomon, which have been already considered in

Sect. XI, and by the following Argument.

ARGUMENT I. "A person of the amplest fortune cannot help the harbouring of snakes, toads,
&c. on his lands; but they will breed, and
nestle, and crawl about his estate whether he will
he will or no. All he can do is to pursue and
kill them whenever they make their appearance:
yet let him be ever so vigilant, and diligent,
there will always be a succession of those creatures, to exercise his patience, and enGAGE his industry. So it is with the true
believer, in respect of indwelling sin." Cavear
against unsound doctrine. page 54. To this we answer:

(1) From the clause which I produce in capicals in this argument, one would think that patience and industry cannot be properly exercised without indwelling fin. If fo, does it not follow, that our Lord's patience and industry always wanted proper exercife, because he was always perfectly free from indwelling fin? We are of a different fentiment with respect to our Lord's christian virtues: and we apprehend, that the patience and industry of the most perfect believer, will always (without the opposition of indwelling sin) find full exercise in doing and fuffering the whole will of God; in keeping the body under; in striving against the sin of others: in testifying by word and deed that the works of the world are evil; in refilting the numberless temptations of him, who goes about as a roaring lion, feeking whom he may devour; and in preparing to conflict with the king of terrors.

(2) Why could not affiduous vigilance clear an estate of snakes, as one of our kings cleared Great-Britain of evolves? Did he not attempt and accomplish what appeared impossible to less resolute minds? Mr. Toplady is too well acquainted with the classics not to know what the heathens

themselves have said of industry and love:

Omnia vincit amor. - Labor improbus omnia vincit,

If "Love and incessant labour overcome the greatest difficulties," what cannot a diligent believer do, who is animated by the love of God, and feels that he can do all things thre Christ who strengtheneth him?

(3) But the capital flaw of Mr. Toplady's argument confifts in so considering the WEAKNESS of free-will, as entirely to leave God and the sanctifying power of his Spirit out of the question. That gentleman forgets, that, for this purpose the Son of God [who is Lord God OMNIPOTENT] was manifested, that he might DESTROY the works of the devil. Nor does he consider, that a worm assisted by omnipotence itself, is capable of the greatest atchievements. Of this we have an illustrious instance in Moses,

Moses, with respect to the removal of the lice, the frogs, and the locusts. Moses intreated the Lord, and the Lord turned a mighty, strong west-wind, which took away the locusts, and cast them into the red sea: There remained NOT ONE LOCUST IN ALL THE COASTS OF EGYPT. Ex. x. 19. If Mr. Toplady had not forgot the mighty God, with whom Moses and believers have to do, he would never have supposed, that the comparison holds good between Christ cleansing the thoughts and heart of a praying believer by the inspiration of his boly spirit, and A MAN who can by no means destroy the snakes and toads that breed, nestle, and crawl about his estate.

(4) The reverend Author of the Caveat finks. in this argument, even below the doctrine of heathen moralists. For, suppose the extirpation of a vicious habit were confidered, would not an heathen be inexcufable, if he overlooked the fuccour and infpiration of the Almighty? And what shall we say of a gospel minister, who writing upon the destruction of fin, entirely overlooks what at other times he calls the fovereign, matchlefs, all-conquering, irrefflible power of divine grace, which [if we believe him] is absolutely to do all in us and for us? -who infinuates, that the toad, pride, and the wiper, envy. must continue to nestle and crawl in our breasts for want of ability to destroy them ; -and who concludes that the extirpation of fin is impossible, because we cannot bring it about by our own strength? Just as if the power of God, which belps our infirmities, did not deserve a thought! Who does not fee, that when a divine argues in this manner, he puts his bushel upon the light of Christ's victorious grace. hides this fin-killing and heart-cleanfing light, and then absurdly concludes that the darkness of fin must necessarily remain in all believers? Thus, if I mistake not, it appears, that Mr. Toplady's argument in favour of the death-purgatory, is contrary to history, experience, and gentilism: And how much more to christianity, and to the honour of him who

to the uttermost saves his believing people from their heart-toads and bosom-vipers, when they go to him for this great salvation!

The next author who shall furnish me with logical shades, is the ingenious and rev. Mr. Martin, who has just published a plea for the necessary indwelling of sin in all believers. He calls it "The christian's peculiar constict, An Essay on Galatians v. 17," And from it I extract the arguments which follow.

ARGUMENT II. Page 15, &c. "O ye vain boasters of inherent perfection, say, Where is " the man among you to be found, who always doth the things that he would? If there be one, " who has this pre-eminence above his brethren, " why should his name be concealed? Is he a " preacher? and dare he affert he has at all times " that discovery of the truth to his own foul he " could wish? &c. Is he a private christian? and " will he venture to declare, that in every character he fustains, &c. he continually acts not only " the confcientious part, but in every respect fulsills the defire of his mind? What! does he hefitate? Is he afraid to attest this in the presence " of an heart-fearching God? How deceitful then " is his confidence! &c. Strange infatuation! If " he cannot at all times do the thiegs, the good " things that he would, can he suppose his best defires are more extensive than that law which is exceeding broad? &c. If he can be fo vain as to suppose this, there is more hope of a fool " than of him who is so wise in his own conceit. If he disowns the inference, and yet maintains his premises, that he is persect, i. e. he is with-" out fin, he has ceased to commit iniquity, what is the conclusion? I am obliged to conclude, that se perfection and imperfection, things as contrary to each other as light and darkness, are with " fuch a deluded person considered as one and the se fame thing." This

This argument stript of its rhetorical ornaments, and put into a plain, logical dress, runs thus:

"When Christians do not do all the good things which they defire to do, they fin, or break God's law, which is purer and broader than their defires: -But the best ministers, and the best private chriftians do not do all the good things which they defire to do:-And therefore the best ministers, and the best private christians fin, and their finless perfection is an empty boaft." We may bring the argument into a still narrower compass, thus: "All short-comings are finful, and therefore inconsistent with every kind of perfection." Now this proposition, which is the basis of the whole argument, has error for its foundation. Granting that fort-comings are inconfiftent with the absolute will of God, and with the perfection of his boundless power, I affirm four things; each of which, if I mistake not, overturns our objector's argument.

(1) The separate spirits of just men made persect are persectly sinlest; nevertheless they do not do all the things that they would; for they have not yet prevailed to get the blood of God's marryrs avenged:—a display of justice this, which they ardently wish for. And I prove it by these words of St. John: I saw under the altar the souls of them that were stain for the word of God, and they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, boly and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth! Rev. vi. 9. Had they done what they wished, i. e. actually prevailed with God, their prayer would have been immediately turned into praises, and persecutors would long ago have

been rooted out from the earth.

(2) For want of infinite wisdom, does not persect love in finite creatures frequently defire to do more for its object than it can? When Michael fought with the Dragon, is it not highly probable that he lovingly defired to hinder his cruel adversary from doing any farther mischief? But did not his persormance fall short of his pious, resigned defire?—May not this be said also of the guardian care of the P 2

angels who minister to the heirs of falvation? Do these loving spirits afford us all the help, or procure us all the blifs, which their tender compaffion prompts them to wish us?—If not; is it not abfurd to suppose, that, barely on this account, they are infully-imperfect? Nay, would it not be an high: degree of rashness and injustice to infinuate, that they are transgressors of God's spiritual law; and that his commandment, which is broader than their defires, is broken by their not doing us all the good, which they defire to do us, and which they would actually do us, if a wife providence had not fet bounds to their commission? Does not this anscriptural, Calvinian legality put the stamp of sin-FULNESS upon all angels and archangels, merely to keep in countenance the antinomian doctrine of the necessary finfulness of all believers?

(3) If we consider our Lord himself as a man, did he do all the good he would while he was upon earth? Did he preach as succe stully as his perfect love made him desire to do? If he had all the success he desired in his ministry, why did he look round upon his hearers with anger; being grieved for the bardness of the r hearts? Why did he weep and complain, How often would I have gathered you, &c. and ye would not?—Were even his private instructions so much blessed to his own disciples, as he could have wished? If they were, what meant these strange expositulations, How is it, that ye have no faith!—Faithless generation, how long shall I be with you?—Hast thou been so long with me, Philip, and yet hast thou not known me?—Will ye Also go

go away?

Nay, had not Christ his INNOCENT INFIRMITIES too? Did he not shudder at the prospect of the cup of trembling! Needed he not the strengthening support of an angel in the garden of Gethsemane? Did he not offer up prayers, with strong cryings and tears, unto him that was able to save him from death? Was he not heard in that HE FEARED? Heb. v. 7.—Did he not innocently cry out upon the cross, My. God! My God! Why hast thou for saken me? And

does.

does not the apostle observe, that We have not an high priest, who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities: but [one who] was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin? Heb. iv, 5. When our opponents therefore, confund sin with natural, innocent infirmities, or with our not doing all the good we would, do they not inadvertently six a blot upon the immaculate character of him who could tay; Which of you convince the me of sin?

- (4) My pious opponent wishes, no doubt, to praise God as perfectly as an angel; whilst an angel probably defires to do it as completely as an arch-angel: but in the nature of things this can-Thousands of God's moral vessels, which are perfect in their place and degree, and as fuch adorn God's universal temple, fall short of each other's perfection, without being finfully imperfect on that account. When deficiencies are natural, and not moral, if we call them fin, in many cases we charge God with the creation of fin. Nor is it any more fin in a man, not to magnify God fo vigoroutly as an angel, or in an angel not to ferve his Creator fo perfectly as an archangel; than it is a fin in a good foldier, not to do the king fuch excellent fervice as an experienced captain, or a confummate general. In the moral world, as well as in the natural, one flar may differ from another flar in glory, without the least disparagement to its peculiar perfection. The injudicious refinements of Calvinitm make a confused jumble of God's works, as they do of God's truths, and of the various perfections which belong to the various classes of his children: but a wife dispenser of the word will do by those various truths and perfections as Joseph did by his brothers; be placed them, the first born according to bis birth-right [or superiority] and the youngest according to bis yourb [or inferiority.]
- in one respect, and imperfection in another respect, may considertly meet in the same subject; or, that

men and things may be perfect in one fenfe and imperfect in another. If our opponents ridicule us for it, we will present them with an ocular, and by no means " metaphyfical" demonstration of their mistake. Two perfect grains, the one of barley, and the other of wheat, lie before us. I fay, with the perfectionists, that the grain of barley is perfect in it's kind; but imperfect, or inferior in excellence when it is compared to the grain of wheat. But Mr. Martin, at the head of the imperfectionists, thinks me deluded, and placing himself in his judgment-feat, gravely fays, "I am obliged to conclude, that perfection and imperfection, things " as contrary to each other as light and darkness, " are with fuch a deluded person considered as one and the fame."-" Some are fo unaccount-" ably abfurd and ridiculous."-Reader, thou are Judge and Jury. Pronounce which of the two deserve best this imputation of "unaccountable abfurdity," the author of this Essay, or that of the Effay on Gal. v. 17.

(6) With respect to this gentleman's triumphant question, "Where is the" [perfect] "man?-Why should his name be concealed?" I hope it has already been fatisfactorily answered in Secr. IV. Arg. XII. To what is advanced there, I add here the following remark. Inveterate prejudice is blind. If it believe not reason, Moses, the prophets, and the apostles, neither would it be persuaded the one rose from the dead. And were-we to point at a person as perfect as Jesus of Nazareth, and to say, Behold the man, I should not wonder if the prepossessed: professors cried out, as some ancient engrossers of orthodoxy did, He is a decriver of the people, teaching perfection throughout all Jewry. And if they did not fay, He is the friend of publicans and finners, away with him; it is not improbable they would fay, He is a friend of the pharifees and Arminians, why do you bear bim? Would ye also be bis disciples? It is in vain to hope, that prejudice expired with those who scoffed at perfection incarnate, and spit in the

face of Jesus Christ; thinking to do God and the Messiah service. Man is man in London as well as in Jesusalem. Our Author goes on:

ARGUMENT III. [Page r8.] "It is not more "effential to those who are partakers of the grace of God in truth, to desire this [the destruction of sin] than it is for every creature as such, to desire an exemption from PAIN and SHAME."—Then follows a dangerous infimation, that we must say by the cup of indivelling sin, as our Saviour did by the cup of pain and shame; "The cup that "my Father giveth me, shall I not drink it?"

Answer. Never was a cup of subtle poison more artfully mixed! And that the reader may not fuspect any mischief, the author borrows the very cup which our heavenly Father presented to Christ in the garden of Gethsemane; a cup of pain and shame. Reader examine this cup before thou drink it. Death is in it. Pour out the new wine which makes the poison it contains palatable. and at the bottom thou will find this mortal fediment. " It is as abfurd abfolutely to defire deli-" verance from for in this life, as absolutely to de-" fire deliverance from pain and frame." To difcover the falshood of this proposition we need only weigh the following remarks. (1) Man mixed for himself the MORAL cup of fin, and God [to punish him mixed the NATURAL cup of pain and hame. -(2) It is excessively wrong to to confound moral and natural evil, as to fay, that, because we cannot with any propriety absolutely pray for deliverance from all natural evil in this life, we ought not absolutely to ask and expect deliverance from all moral evil before death.—(3) When the imperfectionists confound the moral cup of fin, with the natural cup of shame and pain; they are as groffly mistaken, as if they confounded poison, and counter-poison-fin, and its punishment-the murderer's revengeful heart, and the gallows on which he is hanged,—(4) Shame and pain, when they are

appointed for the trial of faith, and endured for righteousness fake, compose the last and greatest of all the beatitudes; a beatitude this, of which our Lord drank to deeply, when for the joy that was fet before bim, be endured the PAIN, and despised the SHAME of the crofs, Heb. xii. 2. But where was indwell no fin ever ranked among the ingredients which compose the beatitudes, that our opponents should thus confound it with pain and Shame? -(5) When they infinuate, that we must bear with fin as patiently as with pan and shame, and drink the moral cup of indwelling iniquity as readily as the natural cup of outward afflict on, do they not groffly confound the cup of devils with the cup of the Lord, and make the fimple believe, that, because we must patiently drink the latter with Chrift, we must also patiently drink the former with Belial?—The captain of our falvation bids us rejoice and be exceeding glad, when we patiently fuffer pain and shame for righteousness sake; therefore, absolutely to deprecate all pain and shame would be to pray against our exceedingly-great joy, yea against our reigning with Christ; for, if we suffer, we shall also REIGN with bim. But where does Christ bid us rejoice and be exceeding glad when we are full of indwelling fin? Or where does he promife that if we harbour indwelling fin, we shall also REIGN with bim?—Christians, awake! We pour out this rank poison before you, that you may advert to its offensive smell : While rash solifidians gather it up. as if it were the honey of Canaan; boldly trample it under foot, and be ye more and more perfuaded. that righteousness calvinistically imputed, and indwelling fin, are the two arms in which the Delilah of the imperfectionists clasps her deluded admirers.

Page 31, Our ingenious author proposes an IM-PORTANT QUESTION. "If the grace of God, says "he, be so abundant as the scriptures represent it, "and the scripture cannot be broken;) why are believers permitted to struggle so long for that wictory they "cannot yet obtain?" [that victory which death is. "to bring them?]—"Whence is it that they, who
pant for perfect purity, should not immediately obtain
a request so desirable?"—For our author lays it down as an undoubted truth, that "Flesh and spirit
mutually lust, desire and strive to obtain a complete
conquest, but at present," [i. e. in this life,] "neither can prevail." Page 26.

This important question we answer thus. Imperfect christians do not attain perfect purity of heart:-(1) Because they do not see the need of it :- because they still hug some accursed thing, or because the burden of indwelling fir is not yet become intolerable to them. They make thift to bear it yet, as they do the tooth-ach, when they are still loath to a have a rotten tooth pulled out .-(2) If they are truly willing to be made clean, they do not yet believe that the Lord both can and will make them clean; or that now is the day of this falvation. And, as faith inherits the promifes of God, it is no wonder if their unbelief miffes this portion of their inheritance.—(3) If they have some faith in the promise that the Lord can, and WILL circumcife their bearts, that they may love him with all their bearts; yet it is not that kind or degree of faith, which makes them completely willing to fell all, to deny themselves, faithfully to use their inferior talent, and to continue instant in prayer for this very bleffing. In fhort, they have not, BECAUSE they ask not, which is the case of the Laodicean imperfectionists; or BECAUSE they aft amifs, which is the case of the imperfect perfectionists -(4) Frequently also they will receive God's bleffing in their own preconceived method, and not in God's appointed way. Hence God fuspends the operation of his fanctifying spirit, till they humbly contess their obstinacy and salse wisdom, as well as their unbelief and want of perfect love. Thus we clear our Sanctifier, and take the shame of our impurity to ourselves. Not so our opponents. They exculpate themselves, and infinuate, that God has appointed

appointed the necessary continuance of indwelling fin in us for life, that the constituted which we maintain with that enemy may answer excellent ends. Their arguments collected in the above-quoted Essay, are produced and answered in the following pages.

ARGUMENT IV. Page 37, &c. " By this quarfare the Lord manifests and magnifies bimself to bis people; and, if I am not mistaken, &c. the con-" tinuance of it is a mean by which believers have " fuch views of the perfections and glory of God, as do " not SEEM to us probable they could HERE obtain " without it." - Then our author instances in God's " unchanging love towards the elect," and in his " fovereign grace—that reigns thro' righteoufness to the " falvation of the guilty."-He next observes, that Those believers who are most conscious of this internal conflict-most sensible of the power and prevalency of indwelling fin-are most thankful that the endearing declarations of God's distinguishing love are true .-And [page 39, 40,] we are indirectly told, that the doctrine of the necessary continuance of indwelling fin magnifies " the power and patience of God: "The power of God to support us under this conflict; and bis patience in bearing with our manifold weak-" ness and ingratitude."-For, great as the burden of our ingratitude is, " yet, He fainteth not, neither " is be aveary."

This is an extract of our author's argument, which, like a fnake, works it way thro' verbose windings, where I have not leisure to follow it. Crush this fnake, and out will come this less viper: The longer sin continues in us, the more God's sovereign love, grace, power, and patience, by which he saves guilty, weak, and ungrateful sinners is manifested to us.—Or, if you please, The longer we continue in sin, or the longer sin continues in us, the more is grace manifested and magnified.—Or, if you will speak as the apostolic controvertist;

Let us continue in fin that grace may abound.—A notion this, which is the very foul of antinomianism unmasked.

To fill the pious reader with a just detestation of this doctrine, I need only unfold it, thus. It the CONTINUANCE of indevelling fin magnifies God's fovereign grace, and patience, in faving ungrateful finners; the CONTINUANCE of outward fin will do this much more: For, the greater our outward fins are, the greater will God's patience appear in bearing with us; and his grace in forgiving us; feeing " be fainteth not, neither is be weary." Thus we are come almost to the top of antinomianism; and, to reach the highest step of the fatal ladder, we need only declare, as the author of the five letters has done, that a grievous, fall [into fin, which he has inflanced in adultery, robbery, murder, and incest] will make us fing louder to the praise of restoring grace throughout all the ages of eternity. [See the fourth of those letters.] Now if a grievous fall will infallibly have that happy effect, it follows that ten fuch falls will multiply ten times the difplay of God's Power and Patience. What a boundless field opens here, to run an antinomian race, and to enlarge our wickedness as hell! What a ladder is here lent us to descend to the depth of the abomination of defolation, in order to reach the loudest notes of praise in heaven! If this solifidian gospel is not one of the depths of fatan, and the greatest too, I am not capable of difcerning midnight gloom from noon-day brightness.

ARGUMENT V. Page 41. "To fave the guilty in fuch a manner as, &c. effectually to humble them who are faved, displays the manifold wisdom of God.—Does it not seem necessary to attain that great end, to make believers experimentally acquainted what an evil and bitter thing sin is, &c. If so, when can the objects of falvation see this with becoming shame and forrow? Not while they are in the gall of bitterness &c. for in that state, so abominable is man, that

be drinketh in iniquity like water.—On the other hand, this cannot be after they are brought to glory. For then, all the painful and shameful memorials of sin will be finally removed.—It must be while slesh and spirit dwell in the same man."

Granted: But what has this argument to do with the question? Did we ever deny, that, as long as we live, we must repent, or be deeply conscious what an evil and bitter thing fin is? The question is, whether indwelling fin is an incentive to true repentance; and whether God has appointed that this fupposed incentive should remain in our hearts till death, left we should forget " what an evil and bitter thing fin is," or lest we should not remember it " with becoming Shame and forrow?" The abfurdity of this plea has already been exposed in Sea. III. Ohi. viii. and ix. And, to the arguments there advanced, I now add those which follow.—(1) Does not experience convince imperfect believers, that the more fretfulness, felf-will, and obstinacy they have in their hearts, the less they do repent? How abfurd is it then to suppose that the remains of these evil dispositions will help them to feel " becoming shame and sorrow" for fin! -(2) Do not our opponents tell their hearers, that we get more becoming shame and forrow by looking one moment at bim subom we have pierced, than by poring upon our corruptions for an hour? If fo, why will they plead for indwelling fin, that 46 becoming shame and forrow" may abound? And why do they pretend, that they exalt Christ more than we, who maintain that our most becoming shame and deepest forrow flow from his ignominy and fufferings, and not from our indwelling fin and conflicting corruptions?—Did not Job abbor bimfelf and repent in dust and abes, when he saw his redeeming God by faith, much more than when he just kept his head above the bitter waters of impatience and murmuring?-(3) The pleaders for the continuance of indwelling fin tell us, "That, as the fight

" fight and attacks of a living and maring lio " make us dread lions more than all the " and pictures which represent their de if fierceness . So the feeling the onfets of inch " ling fin, will make us abhor fin more than all " the descriptions of its odious nature, and the 46 accounts of its fearful confequences: Because a " burnt child naturally dreads the fire."-To this we answer: A burnt child, who pleads for the keeping of a burning coal upon his breaft to mal him dread the fire, has hitherto been burged to little purpole.-Who had ever less to do w indwelling fin and its curfed attacks, than the holy Jefus, and faithful angels? And yet, who is m filled with a perfect abhorrence of all iniquity? On the other hand, who has been more distracted, and longer torn by indwelling fin, than the devil ? and who nevertheless is better reconciled to it? Or who is more plagued by the continual rendings, and bitings of the lions and vipers within, than those paffionate, revengeful people, who fay with all the pefitiveness of Jonah and Abfalom, I do well to be enery and Revenge is faveer? Experience therefore de ftrates the inconclusiveness of this argument. (4) If the penitent thief properly learned in a hours, what an evil and bitter thing external and internal in is; is it not abfurd to suppose, that he must have continued forty years full of indwelling fin to learn that lesson, if God had added 40 years to his life? Would this delay have been to the honour of his divine Teacher? Laftly, when Christ cast seven devils out of Mary Magdales, did he leave one or two devils behind, to teach her " becoming Spame and forrow" for fin ? And was it these two remaining "Diabologians," that made her dissolve in tears at Christ's feet; or the grateful, penitential love which the felt for her gracious deliverer ?- Is it not aftonishing, that goffel mis ters should fo far forget themselves and their Saviour, as to teach [as openly as for decency they dare] that we must fetch our tears of godly forrow

from the infernal lake, and re-kindle the candle of repentance at the fire of hell! and that the fanning breathes of the spirit, and the golden, hallowed snuffers of the fanctuary cannot make that candle burn continually clear, unless we use to the end of our life the black finger of Satan, indwelling sin; and Adam's accursed extinguisher, original corruption!

ARGUMENT VI. Our Authors' next argument in favour of the necessary indwelling of fin during life, is more decent, and confequently more dangerous. The cloven feet of error delicately wear the fandals of truth: but with a little attention we shall foon see, that they are only borrowed or The argument abridged from page 44, and rendered more perspicuous, may run thus.-"If we have frequently been Sothful, and have not at all times exerted our abilities to the uttermost; wby may not God in wisdom rebuke us for it, and make us fensible of that evil, by not permitting us to " effect what at other times we feem determined (if possible) to accomplish;" [that is, by not permitting us utterly to abolish the whole body of fin.]-" If Samson abuse his strength, it is fit be should have cause severely to restect on his folly, by being deprived " of it for a feason, and become as weak as other men." Here we are left to infer, that as Samfon, thro' his unfaithfulness, became as weak as other men for a feafon; fo all believers, on account of their unfaithfulness, must be weakened by indwelling fin during the term of life;

To this we answer, (1) That altho' believers frequently give place to floth and unfaithfulness, yet they are no more necessitated to do it, than Samson was to dally with Delilah.—(2) If the constant indwelling of sin is a just punishment for not making a proper use of the talent of grace which God gives us, it evidently follows, that our unfaithfulness, and not a necessity appointed by God,

finless perfection: and the moment our opponents grant this, they allow all that we contend for; unless they should be able to prove, that God necessates us to be unfaithful, in order to punish us intal-

libly with indwelling fin for life .-

As for Samson, he is most unfortunately brought in to support the doctrine of the necessary indwelling of that weakening fin, which we call inbred corruption: and he might be most happily produced to encourage those unfaithful believers, who, like him, have not made a proper use of their strength in time past: for he outlived his penal weakness, and recovered the strength of a perfect Nazarite before death: witness his last atchievement, which exceeded all his former exploits. For it would be highly abfurd to suppose that he got in a deathpurgatory the amazing strength by which he pulled down the pillars, that supported the large building where the Philistines feasted. Nor need I the strength of a logical Samson, to break the argumentative reeds which support the temple of error, in which the imperfectionists make sport, to their hurt, with the doctrine of that christian Samon, who faid, I can do all things thro' Christ that strengtheneth me-

ARGUMENT VII. Page 47, &c. We are indirectly told [for pious men cannot utter groß antinomianism without the mask of circumlocution] that indwelling sin must continue in us, that "grace" [may] not only be exercised, but distinguished from all that has only the appearance of it.—But—bow is the true grace of God to be here distinguished from that which is but the semblance of it?—By its effects, —a clear and spiritual discovery of the—depravity, deceit and desperate wickedness of our own hearts." And then we are given to understand, that, left we should not be deeply convinced of that desperate wickedness, the continuance of indwelling sin is absolutely necessary. This argument runs into the

fifth, which I have already answered. It is another indirect plea for the continuance of outward adultery and murder, as well as for the continuance of indwelling fin; it being certain that outward adultery, &cc. will convince us of the desperate wickedness of our hearts, still more powerfully than heart-adultery, &cc. To what hard shifts are good men put, when they sight for the continuance of the bud, or root of any sin! Their every stroke for sin is a stab at the very vitals of godliness.

ARGUMENT VIII. Page 48. The continuance of indwelling fin, which is [with great modesty in the ingenious author, and therefore with great danger to the unwary reader | called "this warfare," is supported by the following reason. "It is often an occasion to discover the strength of grace re-" ceived, as well as the truth of it." This argument is all of a piece with the preceding, and puts me in mind of a fpeech, which a shameless, young debauchee made once to me. " I kept [faid he] drinking and dozing in fuch a tavern, without ever going to bed, or being ever fober one hour for twenty-three days. I never had fo remarkable an occasion to discover the strength of my body, and the excellence of my constitution."—However in a few months, while he continued in the occasion to discover his strength, a mortal disorder seized upon him, and, by removing him into eternity, taught me, that if Fulfome, the professor, speaks the truth, when he fays, Once in grace always in grace; Nabal, the fot, was mistaken, when he hinted, Once in bealth always in health. To make the imperfectionifts assumed of this argument, I hope, I need only observe: - (1) That nothing ever showed more the strength of grace than the conflicts which the man Christ Jesus went thro', tho' he never conflicted a moment with indwelling fin :- (2) That the strength and excellence of a remedy, is much better discovered by the removal of the disorder which it is defigned to cure, than by the conflicts which

which the poor patient has with pain, till death come to terminate his misery.—And (3) That the argument I refute, indirectly represents Christ as a physician, who keeps his patients upon the rack to render himself more necessary to them, and to show the strength of the anodyne mixture, by which he gives them now and then a little ease under their

continued, racking pain.

Our author adds, page 49, " If those who bear " the beavieft burdens are sometimes esteemed the strongeft men, they who are thus engaged in this warfare (I wish he would speak quite out, and say, They who bear the heaviest burden of indwelling fin) " bave that evidence of the strength of grace, &c. which " is peculiar to themselves." A great mistake this; for, if we may believe Ovid when Medea murdered her own child, under a fevere conflict with induelling fin, the bad that fatal evidence of what is here proposterously called the strength of grace; but what I beg leave to call the obstinacy of free-will. Sed trahit invitam nova vis, &c. " Paffon, faid the, burries away my unwilling, retuctant mind." Judas, it feems, was not an utter stranger to this conflict [any more than to the burden of guilt,] when he hurried out of it into a death-purgatory. Nor do I blame him for having chosen strangling rather than life, if death can terminate the mifery which accompanies indwelling fin, and do more in that respect for fallen believers than Christ himself ever did. But, supposing that the faving grace of God, which has appeared to all men, never appeared to-Medea and Judas :- Supposing these two finful souls never conflicted with indwelling fin, it will however follow from our author's infinuation, that, in cafe David had defiled half a dozen married women, and killed their husbands to enjoy them without a rival, we should esteem him fix times stronger in grace, if he had not fainted under his fix-fold burden, like Judas; because " in this" [antinomian] " evarfare, those who bear the heaviest burdens are esteemed the " frongeft" believers; and because " they have Q'3

that testimony of their love to Christ, which is peculier to themselves." If Satan was to transform himself into an angel of light, could he preach a more dangerous and immoral gespel to an antinomian and perverse generation?

ARGUMENT IX .- Our author's last argument in favour of the necessary continuance of fin in us, occurs page (1, and runs thus:-" I will only add, "that by this warfare, the Lord weans his people from the prefent evil world, and makes them " long for the land of promise as the land of rest, " &c. I know some will say, This is impossible; " and be ready to ask Are we then debtors to the " flesh?" [A very proper question! which the author answers thus :] "By no means, &c. In our " flesh dwells no good thing, &c. Nevertheless—he [God] can, and does make the presence of evil so irksome to the believer, that it makes him ardently long for complete deliverance from it."-That is, in plain english, he keeps his patients so long upon the rack of their indwelling fin, that at last they are forced to long for Death, the great cleanfer from heart-iniquity. This argument would have been complete, if it had been supported by these two passages, I do well to be angry even UNTO DEATH :-In those days, men [plagued by the locusts which afcend out of the bottomless pit] shall defire to die, and death shall flee from them. To show it's absurdity I need only make two of three remarks upon it.

(1) Mark the inconfishency of our opponents. When they hear us press obedient faith upon a fallen or wavering believer, by mentioning to him the terrors of the Lord, the fear of losing the divine favour, and the danger of being even speed out of Christ's mouth, and condemned without mercy if they show no mercy; they say that inforcing the love of Christ on a disobedient believer, will abundantly answer all the good ends which we propose by thus preaching Christ's law: But, when they plead for the

the continuance of fin, they forget their own doctrine; and tell us that indwelling for is necessary to keep us in the way of duty; namely in an ardent longing for heaven. They blame us for making use of Christ's law to spur believers: And yet they, (See to what aftonishing height their partiality is grown!) they do not blush to preach openly the law of fin to believers; infifting that its working in their members is necessary to " make them long " for the land of promise as the land of rest-and for " the speedy possession of that great good, which God bas " laid up for them :" Page 52 !- We are HERETICS for preaching the law of Christ, the law of liberty! and they, who preach the law of fin, the law of bendage, are ORTHODOX, and engross to themselves the glorious title of gofpel-minifters!

(2) How abfurd is it to prop up the throne of indwelling fin in the heart of believers, that its tyrannical law may make them long for beaven! Did not Christ long for heaven without indwelling fin? Do not the holiest believers, who are most free from indwelling fin, long most for the beatiste vision? And do we not fee that fallen believers, who are most filled with indwelling fin, are most apt to be lovers of fin and the world, more than lovers of God and heaven? Are they not the very people, who, unmindful of Lot's wife, stay in the plain; instead of escaping for their life, and sleeing to the celestial mount of God without ever looking behind

them?

(3) Is not indwelling fin a clog, rather than a spur to the heavenly racers? If sin is of such service to us to make us run the career of holy longing after heavenly rest, why does the apostle exhort us to set aside every eweight, and the sin which does so easily beset us? If we want a spur to make us mend our pace; need we keep the spur inducting so? Is it not more likely to spur us to hell than to heaven? If we have thousands of sinless spurs, what need have we of keeping that to drive us to heaven, which drove Adam behind the trees of the garden, not to say, out of his native paradise?

If you ask, What are the finles spurs of believers? We reply, all the toils, infirmities, and pains of our weary, decaying, mortal bodies; -All the troubles, disappointments, and forrows, which arise as naturally out of our present circumstances, as fparks do out of the fire :- A share of the dreadful temptations which harraffed Christ in the wilderness: And frequent tastes of the bitter cup which made him fweat blood in the garden, and cry out on Calvary.—Hear one, to whom our opponents absurdly give the spur of indevelling fin, as if he had not fourring enough without it: I fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh; Col. i. 24. And furely indwelling fin was never one. of Christ's afflictions .- Again, Who Shall Separate us from the love of Christ? Shall it be tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or favord? As it is written, For thy fake we are killed all the day long: we are accounted as sheep for the flaughter .- Once more : Some avere tortured, not accepting deliverance, and others bad trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea moreover of bonds and imprisonment. They were floned, they were fawn afunder, were tempted, were flain with the sword: they wandered about in Steep-Skins, and goat-Skins, being deflitute, afflicted, tormented; they wandered in deferts. and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.

I grant that all true believers have not these: thorns in the flesh, and feel not the spurs which made Elijah flee for his life before incensed lezebel and request that be might die under the juniper-tree :. but, at the best of times, they have, or should have DAVID's affliction, My eyes run down with water because men keep not thy law :- They have, or should. have JEREMIAH's grief, O that my head were quaters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night, for the defelations of Jerusalem, or for the Slain of the daughter of God's people !- They have. or should have the forrow of just Lor, who was vexed from day to day with the filthy conversation of. the wicked among whom he dwelt. To suppose therefore, that in this vale of tears, tribulation, and fin, we.

we need keep the fting of indwelling fin, because we must frive against the fin which is in the world to the end, even unto blood, if we are called to fecure the crown of martyrdom :- or because it " is the will of God, that through much tribulation ever fould enter the kingdom;" [page 46,] and because we should long for heaven; -to suppose, I say, that we must keep the sting indwelling fin on these accounts, is as abfurd as to suppose, that all the keepers and nurses in Bedlam must be mad, and must continue to be plagued with personal lunacy; lest they should not firive against madness to the end:-left they should not come out of great disturbances when they remove from their dreary habitation; -and left, while they continue there, they should not see mad people enough to make them long for the conversation of reasonable persons.

ARGUMENT X. Page 52, Our author closes his shrewd plea for the Death-purgatory, by proposing a very material objection: "If any exclaim and say, "These sentiments have a tendency to reconcile believers to sin; I must say, —The stell might as soon be reconciled to the spirit, as the spirit to the sless: or sin to grace, as grace to sin. It is often said, That mature will be nature. And why may not this be applied to the divine nature, —of which believers are said to be partakers?" Hence our author infinuates, that the divine nature of believers is immutable; and that, because To will is present with them, when they sin they still retain God's holiness, as "lions and tigers, bowever confined or caressed, retain their ferocity and brutal appetites."

I am glad to fee that this pious author has still the cause of holiness at heart, and desires to stop up the antinomian gap. I am persuaded that he intends to do God service by pleading for the continuance of indwelling sin. It he asks for the reprieve of that robber and murderer, it is merely because antinomianism has deceived him, as formerly pharisaism deceived the jews who cried, Release unto us Barrabbas.

Barrabbas. If he faw, that Christ in us must be crucified afresh, in case the robber in it is not put to death; I doubt not but he would be as forry for his publication, as the devout jews were for their antichristian request, when they were pricked to the

beart on the day of pentecoil.

But alas! if a good intention excuses bad performances, it does not frop their mischief. The very defire which our author evidences to fecure godliness, is so unfortunately expressed, that it gives her as fatal a blow as the tempter did, when he faid to our first parents, Ye shall not surely die. For, when that gentleman intimates to fallen believers, Ye are possessed of the divine nature; and, be your works what they will, if to will be " in some degree present," (page 54) ye are as much possessed of God's. holy image, as a lion is possessed of a lion's fierce nature; what is this, but to preach the very gospel. which the ferpent preached in paradife; with this difference, that the ferpent faid, Te shail not die : Te SHALL BE as Gods; but the imperfectionists fay > Your falvation is finished; Ye have already the "immutable nature" of God: Te ARE ALREADY as Gods?-Adam believed the tempter, and lost his holy nature. The imperfectionists believe our author: Oh! may none of them remain "immutable" in the finful imperfection which he so earneftly contends for!

XI. A CAVEAT. Having faid for much upon our author's mistakes, I should be inexcusable if I did not drop a caution about the veil with which they are covered. His book goes into the world under the harmless title of "The christian's peculiar Constit," whereas it should be called, A Pleas for the propriety and usefulness of the continuance of indwelling sin in all christians. This plain, artless title would have made true christians stand upon their guard; but now they take up without suspicion the cup mixed by the author; and it is well if some bave not already drank it to the dregs without fear.

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An illustration will give the reader an idea of the wisdom with which the title of this Estay is contrived. I write a treatife full upon the advantage of a standing rebellion in the kingdom, and urge a variety of plaufible arguments to flow the great good that will arise from an inveterate oppofition to the government. " If a spirit of rebel-" lion ceases in any subject, the king's patience, 46 mercy, love and power will not be fo fully dif-" play'd, nor will the loyalty of his good subjects " be fo well diftinguished and proved :- Rebellion, " and the burdens that attend it, will make us " long for peace :- Guilty, ungrateful rebels will 46 love the king and admire his mercy the more 44 when they are forgiven after their manifold re-46 bellions. And therefore [to use the unguarded " words of our Author, page 53.] it becomes us " feriously to consider, how far this great end [of a 44 spirit of rebellion continually dwelling in every " Briton's breaft] is underflood, approved, and an-46 fivered."-I show my manuscript to a friend, who fays: Your Effay will alarm every well-wisher to the constitution of the realm. But I remove his objection by faying, I will not call it "An " Eslay on the propriety and usefulness of a spirit " of rebellion constantly harboured in the breast " of every one of his Majesty's subjects:" but I will call it, "The loyal Subject's peculiar Conflict, " An Effay on 1 Sam. xii. 19," and this plaufible title will modeftly make way for my boldeft arguments. Pleas for the continuance of rebellion and indwelling fin, may properly enough be introduced by fuch a stratagem.



SECT.

SECTION XV.

Mr. HILL, objects that the doctrine of christian perfection is POPISH; and the Author shows, that it
is truly evangelical, and stands inseparably connected
with the cordial obedience required by the mediatorial
laws of Moses and of Christ; insomuch that there is
absolutely no medium between the doctrine of an evangelically-sinless perfection, and lawless antinomianism.

—This section contains a recapitulation of the saripture-proofs of the doctrine maintained in these sheets;
and therefore the careful perusal of it is bumbly recommended to the Reader.

AVING taken my leave of the ingenious Author of The Christian's peculiar conflict, I return to Mr. Hill, who, by this time meets me with his Review in his hand, and with that theological fling casts at our doctrine a stone which has indeed frighted thousands of weak fouls, but has never done any execution amongst the judicious. Your doctrine, fays he, " is a POPISH doctrine;" and he might have added with as much reason, that it is a Pelagian doctrine too: For bold as Pelagius and some Popes have been in coining new doctrines, they never came to fuch a pitch of boldness, as to say that they were the authors of the doctrine of evangelical obedience, and of those commandments, which bind us to love God-our covenant - God, with all our heart, and our neighbour as ourselves; precious, gospel-commandments these, upon which the doctrine of perfection securely rests!

What Pope was ever filly enough to pretend that he wrote the book of Deuteronomy, where we find this sweet evangelical law, Hear, O Ifrael: Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy foul, and with all thy might. And these

words

words, which I command thee this day, shall be in the heart — [to do them, I suppose, and not to ridicule them under the names of perfection and popery?] Deut. vi. 5, 6. Now by what argument will Mr. Hill prove that the Pope is the inventor of this blessed doctrine?

Should that gentleman reply, that when God gave his ancient people this gracious law of perfection, he did not give it with an intention that they should personally keep it as an evangelical law; but only with an intention to drive them to the promised Messiah, who was to keep it for them, and to give eternal indulgences to all the believers who break it; we demand a proof; and till Mr. Hill produces it, we show his mistake by the following arguments. (1) Altho' the jewifb dispensation revealed a gracious God, abundant in goodness, mercy, and truth, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and for to returning finners, who penitentially laid hold on his jewish covenant; yet, if I remember right, it never promifed to accept of an obedience performed by another. Hence it is, that God never commanded that jewish females should be circumcifed; but confined his ordinance to the males, who alone could personally obey it. We frequently read of vicarious sufferings in the jewish gospel, but not of vicarious obedience, and vicarious love. For altho' the obedience of godly parents engaged God to bestow many bleffings upon their children; yet the children were to obey for themselves, or to be cut off in the end. The jews were undone by a conceit of the contrary doctrine, and by wild notions about the obedience of Abraham, and the holiness of the temple, which they fancied was imputed to them in the Calvinian way: And a fimilar mikake, it is to be feared, undoes still, multitudes of christians, who fatally mistake the nature of christian obedience, absurdly put on robes of felf-imputed righteoufness, and rashly bespatter the robes of personal, and evangelically-persect obedience, which God requires of every one of us.

(2) The

(2) The mistake I expose would never have been made by our opponents, if they had not used themselves to tear the evangelically-legal part of the scriptures from the context, in order to give it a fense contrary to that of the facred writers; it being certain that when you have torn a man's tongue out of his mouth, you may afterwards force it down his throat, and leave it there with the root against his teeth, and the tip towards his stomach. To show that the precept of perfect love, which I have quoted from Deut. vi, is treated in this manner, as often as our opponents infinuate, God did not intend, that jewish believers should personally observe it as a term of final acceptance. but only that they should be driven thereby to the mediator, who should perfectly love God for them: -To show, I say, the absurdity of this notion, we need only do Moses the justice to hear him out. Let any unprejudiced person read the whole chapter, and he will, I am perfuaded, fide against the Calvinian imputation of a jewish perfection to jewish believers. Moses begins by saying, Now these are the commandments—which the Lord Your God [Yours thro' an evangelical covenant] commanded to teach you, that YE might do them, [and not that your mediator might do them for you.] Deut. vi. 1. Two verses after, he adds, Hear, O Israel, and observe, and do, [Not bear, O Ifrael, and another shall observe and do for thee,] THAT IT MAY BE WELL WITH THEE. Then comes our capital doctrine and precept of perfect love, which, a few verses below, Moses continues to enforce thus: Te shall not tempt the Lord your [covenant-] God .-You shall diligently keep the [evangelical] commands of the Lord your [covenant-] God; and bis [gospel-] testimonies, which he has commanded thee. And thou Shalt do that which is right and good in the fight of the Lord thy God, THAT IT MAY BE WELL WITH THEE .- And when thy Son afketh thee, faying, What -do mean thefe flatutes [of perfect love, &c.] Then thou shalt fay unto thy fon, We were Pharoab's bond-men

in Egypt, and the Lord brought us out.—And, least antinomian hands should draw the golden nail of this perfect obedience for want of proper clinching; this precious chapter, which our church has properly selected for a funday-lesson, ends by these words, which must raise a blush on the face, or strike conviction into the breast, of all who trample under foot the robes of our own evangelical perfection; And the Lord commanded us to do all these statutes,—THAT HE MIGHT PRESERVE US ALIVE:—and it shall be OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS [our gospel-perfection] if we observe to do all these commandments, before the Lord our [covenant-] God, as

be bas commanded us. Deut. vi. 1-25.

If our opponents fay, that this is a transcript of Adam's anti-mediatorial law of paradifaical perfection; and not a copy of Moses's mediatorial law of jewish perfection: or if they affert, that Moses calvinistically hints that the jews were to keep this law by proxy, they may fay that light is darkness. And if they grant that Mofes was no antinomian shuffler, but really meant what he spoke and wrote, it unavoidably follows: -(1) That God really required of every jew an evangelical and personal perfection of love, according to the degree of light and power imparted under the jewish dispensation: (2) That this evangelical, jewish perfection of love was attainable by every fincere jew; because whatever God requires of us in a covenant of grace, he graciously engages himself to help us to perform, if we believingly and obediently embrace his promised affistance.—And (3) That if an evangelical perfection of love was attainable under the jewish gospel [for the gospel was preached to the jews as well as to us, altho' not fo clearly, Heb. iv. 2,] it is abfurd to deny, that the goffel of Christ requires less perfection, or makes less provision, that christians may attain what their dispensations calls them to.

If Mr. Hill thinks that this inference is not just, I refer him to our Lord's declaration: Think not R 2

phets: I am not came to destroy, but to FULFIL; first, by perfectly obeying myself the two great moral precepts of Moses and the prophets; and next, by teaching and helping all my faithful disciples to do the same. Mat. v. 17. Should that gentleman object, to the latter part of this little comment, because it leaves no room for the calvinian imputation of Christ's mediatorial perfection to sallen believers, who sleep in impenitency, under the guilt of adultery covered by murder: we reply, that this part of our exposition, sar from being forced, is highly agreeable to the text, when it is taken in connexion with the scope of our Lord's sermon, and with the context. For,

(1) All Christ's sermons, and especially that upon the mount, inculcate the doctrine of personal perfection, and not the doctrine of imputed perfection. (2) The very chapter out of which this text is taken, ends with these words, Be ye therefore PERFECT, even as your Father, which is in heaven, is perfect. And Mr. Hill, prejudiced as he is against our doctrine, is too candid to affert, that our Lord meant, "Be ye perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect: "Now, he is perfect only by the Calvinan imputation of my righteousness: It is merely the imputation that he makes his sun to rise on the evil and on the good. And he sendeth only a calvinistically-imputed rain upon the just and upon the

" unjust. Be ye therefore perfect only by the impu-

Mr. Hill's mistake has not only no countenance from the distant part of the context, but it is statly contrary to the words which immediately follow the controverted text. For verily I say unto you [that, far from being come to destroy the law and the prophets, that is, the spirituality and strictness of the moral part of the jewish gospel] till beaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law [which pharisaic glosses have unnerved] till all be fulfilled. [And lest you should think

think, that I speak of your fulfilling this law by proxy and imputation, I add, WHOSOEVER Me BREAK ONE of thefe commandments, [which I am going to inforce upon you, as my own mediatorial law; tho' hitherto you have confidered them only as Mofes's mediatorial law] whofeever I fay, shall break one of these LEAST commandments, and by precept and example] teach men fo, be shall be called THE LEAST in the kingdom of beaven: [If he has any place among my people in my fpiritual kingdom, it shall be only among my carnal babes, who are THE LEAST of my fubjects.] But WHOSOEVER SHALL Do and teach them, [the commandments whose spirituality I am going to affert the same shall be called GREAT in the kingdom of beaven, [he shall be an adult, perfect christian in the kingdom of my grace here; and he shall receive a proportionable crown of righteoufness, in the kingdom of my glory hereafter.] Matt. v. 18, 19.

If I am not mistaken, it evidently follows from these plain words of Christ, (1) That he taught a personal perfection, and an evangelically-finless perfection too: -(2) That this perfection confils in not breaking by wilful omiffion the kaft of the commandments which our Lord refeued both from the false glosses of antinomian pharisees, who rested on the imputed righteoufness of Abraham, faying, "We have Abraham for our Father: We are the children of Abraham : We are perfect in Abraham : All our perfection is in Abraham: And from the no less false glosses of those absurdly-legal pharisees, who paid the tithe of anife, mint, and cummin with the greatest scrupulosity, whilst they secretly neglected mercy, truth, and the love of God.-And (3) That the perfection which Christ inforced upon his disciples was not merely of the negative kind, but of the positive also; since it consisted both in DOING; and in TEACHING the LEAST, as well as the GREATEST of God's commandments.

. If you alk what are the greatest of these commandments, which Christ fays his disciples must " do

bave-

et and teach," if they will be great, or perfect in his kingdom and dispensation: St. Matthew anfivers: One of the pharifees, who was a lawyer, asked bim a question, saying, Master, Which is the GREAT commandment in the law [the name then given to the jewish gospel which Moses preached: Jefus faid unto bim, Thou falt love the Lord thy God with all thy beart, and with all thy foul, and with all thy mind: This is the first and GREAT commandment. And the second is like unto it in nature and importance | Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments bang all the law and the prophets. Mat. xxii. 35. That is, Whatever Moses and the other prophets taught and promifed, hangs on the nail of perfect love. All came from, all tended to perfect love under the jewish dispensation: nor is my dispensation less holy and gracious. On the contrary, what the law could not do in a manner fufficiently perfect for my dispensation [forjewish perfection is not the highest perfection at which man may arrive on earth] God fending me into. the world for the atonement and destruction of fin, bas hereby abundantly condemned fin in the flesh, that the righteoufacfs of the mediatorial law, which enjoins perfect love, might be abundantly fulfilled in the heart of them that walk after the spirit of my gospel :- a brighter gospel this, which transmits more direct and warmer beams from the Sun of righteoufness, and can raife the exquisitely-delicious fruit of perfect love to a greater perfection than the gospel which Moses preached. [Compare Rom. viii. 3, with Heb. iv. 2. See also an account of the superiority of Christ's gospel in the Scripturefeales, Sect. VI.]

Agreeably to this doctrine of perfection, our Lord faid to the rich young man, If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments:—If thou wilt be perfect,—follow me in the way of my commandments:—I Love Godwith all thy heart, and thy neighbour as thy-felf: For bleffed are they that do his commandments, that they may enter thro' the gate into the city, and

bave right to the tree of life which is in the firest of that city on either fide of the pure river of the water of life.—This do and thou shalt live evernally in heaven. Bring forth fruit unto perfection, according to the talents of grace and power which thou art entrusted with, and thou shalt inherit eternal life:—thou shalt receive the reward of the inheritance:—thou shalt receive the crown of life, which the Lord has promised to them that love him, with the love which keepeth the commandments, and fulfilleth the royal law. Compare Matt. xix. 17. Luke x. 28. Rev. xxii. 2, 14. Jam. i. 12. and Luke viii. 14.

On these, and the above-mentioned scriptures, we rest the truth and importance of the doctrine of perfection. Jewish perfection principally stands or falls with Deut. vi. and Matt. xxii; and christian perfection, with Matt. v. and xix. to which you may add the joint tellimony of St. Paul and St. James. The former, whom our opponents absurdly make the captain of their imperfection, fays to the judaizing Galatians, BEAR YE one another's burdens fa rare instance of pertect love!] and so FULFIL THE [mediatorial] LAW OF CHRIST. Gal. vi. 2 .- Nor let Mr. Hill fay, that the apostle means we should FULFIL it by proxy; for St Paul adds in the next verie but one, Let every man prove HIS OWN WORK, and then [with respect to that work] be shall have rejoicing IN HIMSELF ALONE, and NOT IN ANOTHER: For [with regard to perfonal, evangelical obedience every man fall bear HIS OWN burden; -a proverbial exprethon, whichanswers to this gospel-axiom, Every man shall be judged according to bis own works.

St. Paul urges the same evangelical and lawful doctrine upon the Romans. Love one another: for be that loveth another, bath fulfilled the law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery:—Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as the self.—Love is the fulfilling of the law. Rom, xiii. 8, &c.

And

And that St. Paul spake this of the mediatorial law of liberty and christian perfection, and not of the Chriftles law of innocence and paradifaical perfection is evident from his calling it the low of CHRIST, that is, Our Redeemer's law, in opposition to our Creater's law, which was given without an atoning facrifice and a mediating prieft, and therefore made no allowance for infirmities, and admitted neither of repentance nor of renovated obedience. Befides, St. Paul was not fuch a novice, as not to know, that the Galatians and the Romans, who bad all finned, as he observes, Rom. iii. 23. could never be exhorted by any man in his fenfes, to fulfil the paradifaical law of innocence by now, loving one another. He therefore indubitably spake of the gracious law of our gentle Melchifedec; - the law of him who faid, A NEW commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. John xiii. 34. — A precious commandment this, which our Lord calls new, not because the jewish mediator had not given it to the Ifraelites, but because the christian mediator inforced it by new motives, gave new, unparallelled instances of obedience to it, annexed new rewards to the keeping of it, and required it to be fulfilled with a new perfection: And that Christians shall be eternally faved or damned according to their keeping or breaking this mediatorial law of christian perfection, this law of Christ, this royal law of Jesus the King of the Jews, we prove by Matt. xviii. 35. vii. 26. xxv. 45. and Luke vi. 46, &c.

If Mr. Hill's prejudices are not removed by what St. Paul fays in Rom xiii. concerning our fulfilling the gospel-law of perfection; we intreat him to ponder the glorious testimony which the apostle, in Rom ii, bears to this law, which he does not scruple to call his gospel. With regard to this gracious rule of judgment, says he, There is no respect of persons with God. For as many as have sinned without a [mediator's written] law, shall also prish without a [mediator's written] law; And as many

as bave finned in [or under a mediator's written] law, shall be judged by the [mediator's written] law. For not the bearers of the [mediator's] law, are just before God, but THE DOERS of the [mediator's] & Jball be justified. [Nor are the heathens totally deftitute of this law :] For when the gentiles, which have not the [mediator's written] law, do by nature by natural conscience, which is the echo of the mediator's voice, and the reflection of the light which enlightens every man that cometh into the world] when the gentiles, I fay, do [by that means] the things contained in the [mediator's] low; they bowing not the [mediator's] law, are [the mediator's] law unto themselves; their conscience also bearing witness; and their thoughts [in consequence of the evitness borne] accusing, or else excusing one another; in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jejus Chrift ACCORDING TO MY GOSPEL, [that is, according to the gospel-law which I preach.] Rom. ii. 11. &c .- For, while some lay up treasures in braven, others treasure up to themselves wrath again, the day of wrath and of the righteous judgment of God, who will render to every man according to his deeds : To them, who by patient continuance in well-doing, for in keeping the mediator's law according to their difpeniation | feek for glory [he will render] eternal life, [like a righteous judge, and gracious rewarder of them that diligently feek him.] But unto them that do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness [he will render] indignation and wrath, [in just proportion to the more or less bright discoveries of the truth, which shall have been made to them.] Rom. ii. 5, &c .- For that fervant, who [clearly] knew bis Lord's will, [by a written law delivered thro' the hands of a mediator] and prepared not bimfelt That he might have boldness in the day of judgement] neither did according to bis will, shall be beaten with many firipes [in the hell of unbelieving jews and disobedient christians.] But be that know not This master's will, by an outwardly-written law, and did [break the law of nature, difobey the voice

of his conscience, and] commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: Luke xii. 47, 48. An indubitable proof this, that, as something is required of all; something, even a talent of grace, a measure of the spiritual light which enlightens every man, is given to all to improve with, and bring forth fruit to perfection, some thirty-fold, some fixty-fold, and others an hundred-fold, according to their respective dispensations.

From these quotations it appears to us indubitable, that the gospel of St. Paul, and, of consequence, the gospel of Christ, is not a wanton, lawless gospel; but an holy, lawful gospel, in which evangelical promifes are properly guarded by evangelical rules of judgment; and the doctrines of grace, wifely connected with the doctrines of juffice. If this is a glaring truth; what a dangerous game do many good men play, when they emasculate St. Paul's gospel, and with antinomian rashness cut off, and cast away that morally-legal part of it, which distinguishes it both from the ceremonial gospel, which the Galatians foolishly embraced; and from the lawless gospel, which solifidian gospellers contend for, under the perverted name of free-grace! And how feriously should we all consider these awful words of St. Paul! There are some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ: But the' ave, or an angel from beaven preach any other gospel unto you [whether it be a more fevere judaizing gospel —or a less strict folifidianizing gospel] than that which we have preached unto you [which flands at an equal distance from burdensome, jewish ceremonies; and from lawless, solisidian tenets; let bim be accurfed. Gal. i. 7, 8.

This recapitulation of the principal scriptureproofs of our doctrine would be exceedingly deficient, if I did not once more remind the reader of the glorious testimony, which St. James bears to the law of liberty. If ye [believers, says he,] fulfil the royal law, according to the scripture, Thou shall love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well: [Ye quit yourselves like perfect christians] But if ye have [uncharitably] respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors: [that is, Ye are condemned by the Mediator's law, under which ye are.] For whosever shall keep the whole law [of the mediator;] and yet [uncharitably] offend in one point, he is guilty of all, &c. So speak ye therefore, and so do, as people that shall be judyed by the law of liberty [the Mediator's law.] For he [the imperfect, uncharitable, sallen believer] shall have judyment without mercy, that bath showed no [charity, or]

mercy. Jam. ii. 8.

We rest our doctrine of jewish and christian perfection on these consentaneous testimonies of St. James and St. Paul; of Moies, the great lawgiver of the Jews; and of Christ, the great Lawgiver of the Christians; the doctrine of perfection, or of perfectly-cordial obedience, being inseparably connected with the mediatorial laws of Moles and of Christ. The moment you destroy these laws, by turning them into " rules of life," thro' the perfonal observance of which no believer shall ever be justified or condemned, you destroy the ground of jewish and christian perfection, and you impose upon us the lawless, unscriptural tenet of an obedience performed by proxy, and of an imputed perfection, which will do us as little good in life, death, and judgment, as imputed health, opposed to inherent health will do to a poor, fickly, dying criminal. Thus, after leading my reader around a large circle of proofs, I return to the very point whence I started, [See the beginning of the prefe And I conclude, that a gospel without a mediatorial law, without an evangelical law, without the conditional promife of a crown of heavenly glory to the obedient, and without the conditional threatning of infernal stripes to the disobedient,-I conclude, I fay, that fuch a gospel will always lead us to the center of antinomianism; to the Diana and Hecate of the Calvinists; to Lawless Free-grace and Everlasting Free-wrath; or, if you please, to Finished
fabration and Finished damnation. On the other
hand, the moment you admit what the jewish
and christian gospel-covenants are so express about,
I mean an evangelical law, or a practicable rule of
judgment, as well as of conduct, eternal falvation
and eternal damnation become conditional: They
are suspended upon the evangelical perfection or
imperfection of our obedience; and the Rev. Mr.
Berridge hits on the head the golden nail, on which
bang all the law and the prophets, all the four gospels
and the epistles, when he says, "Sincere obedience
"as a condition, will lead you unavoidably up to
"perfect obedience."

And now reader chuse which thou wilt follow, Mr. Hill's lawless antinomian gospel, or St. Paul and St. James's gospel including the evangelical law of christian liberty and perfection, by which law thou shalt be conditionally justified or condemned, when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, ACCORDING TO MY GOSPEL. Rom. ii. 16. If thou chuse imputed righteousness and imputed perfection without any condition, it will " unavoidably" lead thee down into a death-purgatory, thro' the chambers of induelling fin, if thou art an elect in the Calvinian sense of the word; or to eternal damnation, thro' the chambers of necessary fin, if thou art one of those whom our opponents call reprobates. But if thou cordially chuse the fincere, voluntary, evangelical obedience of faith, which we preach both as a condition and as a privilege; it will, [Mr. Hill's fecond being judge,] "unavoid-" ably lead thee up to perfect obedience." There is absolutely no medium between these two gospels. Thou must be either a Crispian, lawless imperfectionist, or an evangelical, lawful perfectionist; unless thou chuse to be a Gallio, - one who cares for none of these things. Thou must wrap thyself up in unscriptural notions of imputed righteousness, imputed holiness.

holiness, and imputed obedience, which make up the ideal garment of calvinistically imputed perfection: Or thou must perfectly well in the blood of the damb thy robes of inherent, the deriv'd righteoutness, holiness, and obedience, which [when they are thus washed] are the rich, wedding garment of evangelical perfection.

SECTION XVI.

Mr. Hill objects, that the distinction between \$1N5, and [evangelically-speaking] INNOCENT INFIRMITIES, is a licentious distinction derived from the church of Rome.—The author shows, that it is truly scriptural; and that judicious Calvinists, and the church of England hold it. He draws the line between sus and innocent infirmities.—A view of the extremes into which rigid, Pelagian perfectionists, and rigid Calvinian imperfectionists, have run east and west from the gospel-line of an evangelically-suless perfection.—An answer to Mr. Henry's grand argument for the continuance of indwelling-sin.—Conclusion of the argumentative part of this Essay.

that the doctrine of an evangelically-finless perfection is truly scriptural; being inseparably connected with the greatest and most excellent precepts of the old and new testament, and with the most evangelical and awful sanctions of Moses and Jesus Christ. This might suffice to show, that our doctrine of perfection cannot be called posis, or pelagian, with any more candor, than the doctrine of the Trinity can be branded with those epithets, because Pelagius and the Pope embrace it. Is, in order to be good protestants, we were obliged to renounce all that the Jews, Turks, and insidels hold; we should renounce the old testament, because of God, because the Mahometans contend for it: Nay, we should renounce common humanity, because all insidels approve it. I beg leave however to dwell a moment more upon Mr. Hill's objection, that the Pope holds our doctrine.

When this gentleman was at Rome, he may remember that his Cicerone shewed him, in the ancient church of St. Paul without the Gate, [If I remember the name right] the pictures of all the popes from St. Peter, Linus, Cletus and Clement, down to the pope who then filled what is called "St. Peter's chair." According to this view of papacy, Mr. Hill is certainly in the right; for if he turns back to Sect. V, he will fee that Peter, the first pope [so called] was a complete perfectionist, and if Clemens, or St. Clement [Paul's fellowlabourer] was really the fourth Pope, it is certain, that he also held our doctrine as well as Peter and Chrift; for he wrote to the Corinthians, " By love were all the elect of God made perfect,—Those " who were made perfect in love are in the region " of the just, and shall appear in glory.—Happy "then are we, if we fulfil the commandments of God in the unity of love. - Following the command-" ments of God THEY SIN NOT." St. Clem. Ep. - to the Cor. This glorious testimony, which St. Clement bears to the doctrine of perfection might be supported by many-correspondent quotations from the other Fathers. But as this would too much fwell this Essay, I shall only produce one, which is fo much the more remarkable, as it is taken from St. Jerom's third dialogue against Pelagius, the rigid, overdoing perfectionist. " Hoc et nos "dicimus, posse hominem non peccare, si velit, pro tempore, pro loco, pro imbecillitate corpo-" rea, quamdiu intentus est animus, quamdiu " chorda nullo vitio laxatur in citharâ." - That is, We [who oppose Pelagius's notions about Adamic perfection maintain also, that considering our time, place, and bodily weakness, we can avoid sinning if we will

of our harp [i.e. of our christian resolution] is not

flackened by any wilful fault.

When I read these blessed testimonies in favour of the truth which we vindicate, my pleased mind slies to Rome, and I am ready to say, Hail! ye holy popes and Fathers, ye perfect Servants of my perfect Lord! I am ambitious to share with you the names of "Arminian, Pelagian, Papist, temporary monster, and Atheist in masquerade." I publish to the world my stedsast resolution to follow you, and any of your successors, who have done and taught Christ's commandments. And I enter my protest against the mistakes of the ministers, who reach that Christ's law is impracticable, that sin must dwell in our hearts as long as we live, and that we must continue to break the Lord's precepts in our inward parts unto death.

I shall close my answer to this Argument of Mr. Hill, by a quotation from Mr. Wesley's Remarks upon the Review. "It [our doctrine of christian "perfection] has been condemned by the Pope "and his whole conclave, even in this present century. In the samous bull Unigenitus they utterly condemn the aninterrupted all [of faith and love, which some then talked of, of contimually rejoicing, praying, and giving thanks] as dreadful heresy!"—If we have Peter and Clement on our side, we are willing to let Mr. Hill screen his doctrine behind the pope who issued out the bull Unigenitus, and if he pleases, behind the pre-

fent pope too.

However, fays Mr. Hill, "The distinction between fins and innocent infirmities is derived from
the Romish church."

Answer. (1) We rejoice, if the church of Rome was never so unreasonable, and so deluded by antinomian popes, as to confound an involuntary, wandering thought, an undesigned mistake.

and a lamented fit of drowfiness at prayer, with adultery, murder, and incest; in order to represent Christ's mediatorial law as absolutely impracticable; and to infinuate that fallen believers, who actually commit the above-mentioned crimes, are God's dear children, as well as the obedient believers, who labour under the above-described infirmities.

(2) We apprehend that Mr. Hill, and the divines who have espoused Dr. Crisp's errors, are some of the last persons in the world, by whom we may, with decency, be charged to hold "licentious" doctrines. And we are truly forry, that any protestants should make it their business to corrupt that part of the gospel, which (if we believe Mr. Hill) the Pope himself has modestly

spared .-

(3) Mr. Hill might, with much more propriety, have objected, that our distinction is derived from the jewish church: for, " the old roque," as some folifidians have rashly called Moses, evidently makes a distinction between fins and infirmities: He punished a daring sabbath-breaker, and an audacious rebel, with death, -with present death, -with the most terrible kind of death. The language of his burning zeal feemed to be that of David, Be not merciful to them that offend of malicious wickedness. Pf. lix. 5.—But upon such as accidentally contracted fome involuntary pollution, he inflicted no other punishment, than that of a separation from the congregation till evening. If Mr. Hill confiders the difference of these two punishments, he must either give place to perverseness, or confess, that wilful fins, and involuntary infirmities, were -not calvinifically confounded by the mediator of the old covenant? and that Moses himself made a rational and evangelical distinction between the spot of God's children, and the foot of the perverse and crooked generation. Deut xxxii. 4.

(4) That Christ, the equitable and gracious mediator of the new covenant, was not less merciful than stern Moses, with respect to the distinction we contend for, appears to us evident from his making a wide difference between the almost involuntary drowsiness of the eleven disciples in Gethjemane, and the malicious watchfulness of the traitor Judas. Concerning the offence of the former, he faid, The spirit indeed is willing, but the sless is weak; and with respect to the crime of the latter, he declared, It would be good for that man, if he had never been born.

(5) David and Paul exactly followed herein the doctrine of Moses and Christ. The Psalmit says, Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins: let them not have the dominion over me: then shall I be upright; [or rather, as the word literally means in the original] I SHALL BE PERFECT, and innocent from the great transgression. Psalm xix. 13. Hence it is evident that some transgressions are incompatible with the perfection which David prayed for and that some errors, or some secret [unnoticed, in-

voluntary | faults are not.

(6) This, we apprehend, is evident from his own words, Bleffed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth no fin; and in whose spirit there is NO GUILE, [tho' there may be some improprieties in his words and actions.] Pfa. xxxii. 2. David's meaning may be illustrated by the well-known case of Nathanael Philip faid to him, We bave found bim or whose Moles wrote in THE LAW: [A clear proof this, by the bye, that the law frequently means the jewiff golpel, which testifies of Christ to come: 1 It is Jejus of Nazareth. And Nathanael Said unto bim. Can any good thing come out of Nazareth? Here was an involuntary fault, an improper quoting of a. proverbial expression; and nevertheless, as he quoted it with a good intention, and to make way for a commendable enquiry into the report which he heard, his error was confident with perfection; he continued innocent from the great [wilful] transgression. This I prove: (1) By his conduct; Philip faith unto bin, Come and fee: And he instantly went, S. 3. withouse

without betraying the least degree of the felf-conceited stiffness, furly pride, and morose refistance, which always accompany the unloving prejudice, by which the law of Christ is broken.—And (2) By our Lord's testimony : Jefus fow Nathanael coming to bim, and faith of bim, Behold an Ifraelite indeed, in whom is no guile !- that is, no mixture of indwelling fin. Our Lord's word for guile, in the original, is dolos, the very word, which, being also connected with a negative, forms the epithet adoles, whereby St. Peter denotes the unadulterated purity of God's word, which he compares to fincere, or perfectly-pure wilk. 1 Pet. ii. 2. Hence I conclude, that, Christ himself being witness, [evangelically-speaking] there was no more indwelling fin in Nathanael, than there is in the pure word of God; and that this is the happy case of all those, who fully deserve the glorious title of Ifraelite indeed, which our Lord publicly bestowed upon Nathanael. To return:

(x) If to make a distinction between fins and infirmities, constitutes a man half a papist, it is evident that St. Paul was not less tinctured with popery [fo called] than David, Mofes, and Jefus Christ: for he writes to Timothy: Them that SIN. rebuke before all, that others also may fear. I Tim. v. 20. And yet, he writes to the Romans, We that ere flrong, ought to bear with the INFIRMITIES of the weak. Rom. xv. 1. Here are two plain commands; the first, not to bear with fins; and the fecond, to bear with infirmities: A demonstration this, that there is an effential difference between fins and infirmities, and that this difference is discoverable to others, and much more to ourselves. Nay, in most cases, it is so discernible to those who have their spiritual senses properly disposed, that they can as eafily distinguish between fins [properly so called and infirmities: as a wife judge can diffinguish between accidental death, and wilful murder; or between unknowingly passing a false guinea with a kind intention to relieve the poor, and treasonably coining it with a roguish defign to defraud the public.

public. The difference between the sun and the moon is not more striking in the natural world, than the difference between fus and infirmities is in the moral world. Nevertheless, blind prejudice will probably confound them still, to darken counsel, and to raise a cloud of logical dust, that Antinomianism [the Diana of the imperfectionists] may make her escape, and save inducting sin, which is the claw of the hellish lion, the tooth of the old dragon, the fishing hook of Satan, and the deadly

sting of the king of terrors.

(8) Judicious Calvinists have feen the propriety of the distinction, for which we are represented as unfound protestants. Of many whom I could mention, I shall only quote one, who, for his piety, wisdom, and moderation, is an honour to calvinism: I mean the Rev. Mr. Newton, minister of Olney. In his Letters on religious subjects, p. 199, he makes this ingenuous confession: " The experience of past years has taught me" [and I bope that, fome day or other, it will also teach our other opponents] " to " distinguish between ignorance and disbedience. 4 The Lord is gracious to the weathers of his " people: Many involuntary mistakes will not inter-" rupt their communion with him: He pities their "infirmity, and teaches them to do better. But if "they dispute his known will, and act against the " dictates of conscience, they will furely fuffer for it. " -Wilful fin fadly perplexes and retards our " progres."-Here is, if I millake not, a clear distinction made by a true protestant, between difebedience or wilful fin, and weaknefs, involuntary miftakes, or infirmity.

authority, I beg he would show some respect for the authority of our church, and the import of his own prayers. If there is absolutely no difference between wilful fins, involuntary negligences, and unavoidable ignorances; why does our church distinguish between them, when she directs us to pray in the litany, that it may please God to forgive us all

words have but one meaning, should not Mr. Hill leave out the two last, as ridiculous tautology? Or, at least, to remove from our church the suspicion of popery, should he not pray every sunday, that God would forgive us all our fins, fins, and fins?

From the nine preceding remarks and quotations it appears, if I mittake not, that our important distinction between wilful sin and instrmities, or involuntary offences, recommends itself to reason and conficience; that it is supported by the law of Moses, and the gospel of Christ; by the Psalms of David, and the Epistles of St. Paul; by the writings of judicious calvinists, and the liturgy of our church: And therefore, it is as absurd to call it a popil distinction, because the papils are not injudicious enough to reject it, as it is absurd to call the doctrine of Christ's divinity, a doctrine of devils, because devils acknowledged him to be the Son of God,

and their omnipotent controller.

Should Mr. Hill reply, that, if this diffinction cannot properly be called popish, it deserves to be called "antinomian" and "licentious;" because it countenances all the men, who give to their groffeft fins, the fost name of innocent infirmities: We anfwer: (1) It has been proved, that Mofes and Jesus Christ held this distinction; and therefore to call it antinomian and licentious, is to call not only Christ, the holy one of God, but even " legal" Moses an antinomian, and an advocate for licentions ness. See what these Calvinian refinements come to!-(2) The men who abuse the doctrine of the distinction between fins and infirmities, abuse as much the doctrine of God's mercy, and the important distinction between working days and the Lord's day : But, is this a proof that the doctrines of God's mercy, and of the distinction between the Lord's day and other days, are " licentious tenets, against which all that wish well to the interest of protestantism? Should protest in a body?" IE

"Where will you draw the line between wilful fine and [evangelically speaking] INNOCENT infirmities?"—We reply without the least degree of embarrassiment; Where Moses and the prophets have drawn it in the old testament; where Christ and the apostles have done it in the new; and where we do it after them in these pages. And retorting the question to show it's frivolousness, we ask: Where will Mr. Hill draw the line between the free, evangelical observing of the Lord's day, and the superstitious, pharisaic keeping of the sabbath; or between weak, saving saith, and wilful unbelies?—Nay, upon his principles, where will he draw it even between a good and a bad work; if all our good works are really dung, dross, and filthy rags?

However, as the question is important, I shall give it a more particular answer. An infirmity is a breach of Adam's law of paradifaical perfection, which our covenant-God does not require of us now : And [evangelically-speaking] a fin for christians. is a breach of Christ's evangelical law of christian perfection; a perfection this, which God requires of all christian believers .- An infirmity [confidering it with the error which it occasions] is confident with pure love to God and man: but a fer is inconfistent with that love.—An infirmity is free from guile, and has its root in our animal frame: but a fin is attended with guile, and has its root in our moral frame; fpringing either from the habitual corruption of our heart, or from the momentary perversion of our tempers.—An infirmity unavoidably refults from our unhappy circumilances, and from the necessary infelicities of our present state. But a for flows from the avoidable and perverse choice of our own will.—An infirmity has its foundation in an involuntary want of light and power: And a fin, in a wilful abuse of the present light and power we have. The one arises from involuntary ignorance and weakness, and is always

attended with a good meaning, a meaning unmixed with any bad defign, or wicked prejudice: But the other has its fource in voluntary perverseness and presumption, and is always attended with a meaning altogether bad; or, at best, with a good meaning founded on wicked prejudices. If to this line, the candid reader adds the line which we have drawn [Section VI,] between the perfection of a gentile; that of a jew, and that of a christian, he will not easily mistake in passing a judgment between the wilful sins which are inconsistent with an evangelically-sinless perfection, and the innocent infirmities which are consistent with such a perfection.

Confounding what God has divided, and dividing what the God of Truth has joined, are the two capital stratagems of the God of Error. The first he has chiefly used to eclipse or darken the doctrine of christian perfection. By means of his instruments, he has perpetually confounded the Christless law of perfect innocence given to Adam before the fall; and the mediatorial, evangelical law of penitential faith, under which our first parents were put, when God promised them the seed of the woman, the mild Lawgiver, the Prince of peace, the gentle King of the jews, who breaks not the bruised reed, nor quenches the smoking flax, but compassionately tempers the doctrines of justice by the doctrines of grace, and instead of the law of innocence [which he has kept and made honourable for us] has fubilituted, his own evangelical law of repentance, faith, and gospel-obedience, which law is actually kept, according to one or another of it's various editions, by all just men made perfect; that is, by all the wife virgins, who are ready for the midnight ery, and the marriage of the Lamb.

Hence it appears that Pelagius and Augustin were both right in some things, and wrong in a capital point. Pelagius, the father of the rigid perfectionists and rigid free-willers, afferted that Christ's law could be kept, and that the keeping of that law

was all the perfection which that law requires. So far Pelagius was right; having reason, conscience, and scripture on his side. But he was grossly mistaken, if he consounded Christ's mediatorial law, with the law of paradisaical perfection. This was his capital error, which led him to deny original sin, and to extol human powers so excessively as to intimate, that by a saithful and diligent use of them, man may be as innocent, and as perfect, as Adam

was before the fall.

On the other hand, Augustin, the father of the rigid imperfectionists, and rigid bound-willers, maintained, that, our natural powers being greatly weakened and depraved by the fall, we cannot, by all the helps which the gospel affords, keep the law of innocence; that is, always think, speak, and act, with that exactness, and propriety, which became immortal man, when God pronounced him very good in paradife: he afferted, that every impropriety of thought, language, or behaviour, is a breach of the law of pertection, under which God placed innocent man in the garden of Eden: and he proved that every breach of this law is a fin against it, because the transgression of a law is fin; and that, of consequence, there can be no Adamic paradifaical perfection in this life. So far Augustin was very right: -So far reason and scripture support his doctrine: - And so far the church is obliged to him for having made a stand against Pelagius. But he was very much mistaken when he abolished the essential difference which there is between our Creator's law of strict justice, and our Redeemer's mediatorial law of justice tempered with grace and mercy. Hence he concluded that there is absolutely no keeping the law, and confequently no performing any perfect obedience in this life; and that we must fin as long as we continue in the body. Thus, while Pelagius made adult christians as perfectly finless as Adam was in paradife; Augustin made them so completely forful, as to make it necessary for every one of them to go

into a death-purgatory, crying, "There is a law in my members, which brings me into captivity to the law of fin. Sin dwelleth in me. With my flesh I ferve the law of fin. I am carnal, fold under fin.—O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me?"

The feripture-doctrine, which we vindicate, stands at an equal distance from these extremes of Pelagius and Augustin. It rejects, with Augustin, the Adamic perfection which Pelagius abfurdly pleaded for: And it explodes, with Pelagius, the necessary continuance of indwelling fin and carnal bondage, which Augustin no less absurdly mainrained. Thus, adult believers are still finners,still imperfect, according to the righteous law of paradifaical innocence and perfection: and yet, they are really faints, and perfect according to the gracious law of evangelical justification and perfection; a law this, which confiders as upright, and perfect, all the godly heathers, jews, and chriftians, who are without guile in their respective folds, or under their various difpendations. Thus, by still vindicating the various editions of Christ's mediatorial law, which has been at times almost buried under heaps of pharifaic and antinomian mistakes, we still defend practical religion. And, as in the Scripture-Scales, by proving the evangelical marriage of Free-grace and Free-will, we have reconciled Zelotes and Honestus with respect to faith and works: So in this Essay, by proving the evangelical union of the doctrines of grace and justice in the mild and righteous law of our Redeemer, we reconcile Augustin and Pelayius, and force them to give up reason and scripture, or to renounce the monstrous errors which keep them afunder; I mean the deep, antinomian errors of Augustin, with respect to indwelling fin and a death-purgatory; and the high-flown, pharifaic errors of Pelagius, with regard to Adamic perfection, and a complete freedom from original degeneracy. The

The method we have used to bring about this reconciliation is quite plain and uniform. We have kept our scripture-scales even, and used every weight of the fanctuary without prejudice; especially those weights which the moralists throw aside as Calvinific and antinomian; and those which the folifidians cast away as Mosaic and legal. Thus, by evenly balancing the two gospel-axioms, we have re-united the doctrines of grace and of justice, which heated Augustin and heated Pelagius have feparated; and we have diftinguished our Redeemer's evangelical law, from our Creator's paradifaical law; two distinct laws these, which those illustrious antagonists have confounded; and we flatter ourselves that, by this artless means, another step is taken towards bringing the two partial gospels of the day. to the old standards of the one, complete gospel of Jesus Christ.

I have done unfolding our reconciling plan: But the disciples of Augustin rally'd by Calvin. have not done attacking it. I hope that I have answered the objections of Mr. Hill, Mr. Toplady. and Mr. Martin, against the evangelical perfection which we defend; but another noted divine of their perfuafion comes up to their affiftance. It is the Rev. Mr. Matthew Henry, who has deservedly got a great name among the Calvinits, by his valuable Exposition of the Bible in five folio volumes. This huge piece of ordnance, carries an heavy ball, which threatens the very heart of our finless gospel. It is too late to attempt an abrupt and filent flight. Let then Mr. Henry fire away. If our doctrine of an evangelically-finless perfection is founded upon a rock, it will fland: the ponderous ball, which feems likely to demolish it, will rebound against the doctrine of indwelling-fin: And the standard of christian liberty which we wave, will be more respected than ever.

"Corruption" [faith that illustrious opponent]
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that they may learn war, may keep on the whole

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" Corruption" [faith that illustrious opponent] is left remaining in the heart of good christians, " that they may learn war, may keep on the whole

" armour of God, and stand continually upon their " guard."-" Thus corruption is driven out of the heart of believers by little and little. The work of fanctification is carried on gradually; but " that judgment will at length be brought forth " into a complete victory."-Namely, when Death shall come to the assistance of the atoning blood, and of the spirit's power. That this is Mr. Henry's doctrine is evident from his comment on Gal. v. 17, "In a renewed man, where there is " fomething of a good principle, there is a struggle " between, &c. the REMAINDERS OF SIN, and " the beginnings of grace; and this, christians " must expect will be their exercise as LONG AS "THEY CONTINUE IN THIS WORLD:"-or, to speak more intelligibly, till they go into the deathpurgatory.

Not to mention here again, Gal. v. 17, &c. Mr. Henry builds this uncomfortable doctrine upon the following text, The Lord thy God will put out those nations before thee BY LITTLE AND LITTLE; thou mayeft NOT confume them AT ONCE, left the beafts of the field increase upon thee, Deut. vii. 22. And he gives us to understand, that " PRIDE and SECURITY, and other fins" are " the enemies more dangerous than the beafts of the field, that would be apt to increase" upon us, if God delivered us from indwelling fin, i. e. from the remains of pride, and carnal fecurity, and other fins. - This exposition is back'd by an appeal to the following text, Now these are the nations, which the Lord left to prove Ifrael by them-to know whether they [the Ifraclites] would hearken to the commandments of the Lord. Judg. iii. 1, 4. Mr. Henry's Exposition on these passages.

To this we answer: (1) That it is absurd to build the mighty doctrine of a death-purgatory upon an historical allusion. If such allusions were proofs, we could easily multiply our arguments. We could say, that sin is to be UTTERLY destroyed, because Moses says, The Lord delivered into our hands

bands Og, and all bis people, and we finote bim UNTIL NONE WAS LEFT TO HIM REMAINING, Deut. iii. 3. -Because Joshua smote Horam king of Gezer and bis people, until be bad left bim NONE REMAINING. Deut. iii. 33.—Because Saul was commanded UTTERLY TO DESTROY the finners, the Amalekites, and loft his crown for sparing their king: Because, when God overthrew Pharaob and all his boft, THERE REMAINED NOT SO MUCH AS ONE OF THEM: Ex. xiv. 28. Because when God rained fire upon Sodom and Gomorrah, he overthrew ALL their [wicked] inhabitants :- And because Moses says, I took Your sin, the calf which ye had made, and burnt it with fire, and flamped it, and ground it very small, even until it was as small as duft, and caft the duft thereof into the brook. Deut. ix. 21. But we should blush to build the doctrine of christian perfection upon so absurd and slender a foundation. And yet, fuch a foundation would be far more folid, than that on which Mr. Heavy builds the doctrine of christian imperfection, and of the necessary indwelling of fin in the most holy believers: For,

(2) Before God permitted the Canaanites to remain in the land, he had faid, ' When ye are passed over Jordan, then ye shall drive out ALL the inhabitants of the land before you, and destroy ALL their pictures :- for I have given you the land to possess it .- But, if ye will not drive out the inhabitants of the land before you, then it shall come to pass, that those which ye let remain of them, shall be pricks in your eyes, and thorns in your fides, and shall vex you in the land wherein ye dwell. And moreover I shall do unto ' you, as I thought to do unto them.' Numb. xxxiii. 51, &c. Hence it appears, that the sparing of the Canaanites was a punishment inflicted upon the Ifraelites, as well as a favour shewn to the Canaanites, some of whom [like Rabab and the Gibeonites] probably turned to the Lord, and as God's creatures, enjoyed his faving mercy in the land of promise. But is indwelling fin one of God's creatures, that God fould shew it any favour, and should refuse his assistance

so the faithful believers, who are determined to give it no quarter? Can indivelling fin be converted to God, as the indivelling Canaanites might, and as

fome of them undoubtedly were:

(3) But the capital flaws of Mr. Henry's argument are, I apprehend, two suppositions, the ab-furdity of which is glaring: "Corruption [fays " he] is left remaining in the heart of good chrif-" tians, that they may learn war, may keep onthe whole armour of God, and stand continually " upon their guard." Just as if Christ had not learned war, kept on the breast-plate of righteousness, and flood continually upon his guard, without the help of indwelling fin !- just as if the world, the devil, the weakness of the flesh, and death, our last enemy, with which our Lord so severely conflicted, were not adversaries powerful enough to prove us, to engage us to learn war, and to make us keep on and use the whole armour of God to the end of our life?-The other abfurd supposition is that " pride, and fecurity, and other fins" [which are supposed to be typified by the wild beafts mentioned in Deut. vii. 22,] will increase upon us by the destruction of indwelling sin. But is it not as ridiculous to suppose this, as to say, " Pride shall " increase upon us by the destruction of pride; and " carnal fecurity will gather strength by the extir-" pation of carnal fecurity, and by the implanting " of constant watchfulness, which is a branch of the " christian perfection which we contend for?"

(4) With respect to the inference, which Mr. Henry draws from these words, Thou mayst not consume them AT ONCE: The Lord will put them out before thee BY LITTLE AND LITTLE; is it not highly absurd also? Does he give us the shadow of an argument to prove, that this verse was spoken of our indwelling corruptions? And suppose it was, would this prove that the doctrine of a death-purgatory is true? You say to a greedy person, You must eat your dinner by little and little, you cannot swallow it down at one gulp: A farmer teaches his son to plow, and says, We cannot plow this field

by making one furrow after another, till we end the last furrow. Hence I draw the following inferences: We eat our meals, and plow our fields, by little and little; and therefore no dinner can be eaten, and no field plowed before death. A furgeon says, that the healing of a wound "is carried on gradually:" Hence his prejudiced mate runs away with the notion, that no wound can be healed so long as a patient is alive. Who does not see the

flaw of these conclusions?

(5) But the greatest absurdity, I apprehend, is vet behind. Not to observe, that we do not remember to have read any command in our bibles not to confume SIN AT ONCE; or any declaration, that God will put it out only " by little and little;" we ask: What length of time do you suppose God means? You make him fay, that he will make an end of our indwelling fin by little and little: Do you think he means four days, four years, or fourfcore years?-If you fay, that God cannot or will not wholly cleanfe the thoughts of our hearts under four-score years, you fend all who die under that age into hell, or into some purgatory, where they must wait till the eighty years of their conflict with indwelling fin are ended .- If you fay, that God care or will do it in four days, but not under; you abfurdly suppose that the penitent thief remained at least three days in paradife full of indwelling fin; feeing his fanclification was to be " carried on gradually" in the space of four days AT LEAST .- If you are obliged to grant, that, when the words by little and little, are applied to the destruction of indwelling fin, they may mean four bours [the time which the penitent thief probably lived after his conversion] as well as four days; do you not begin to be ashamed of your system? And if you reply. that death alone fully extirpates indwelling fin; does not this favourite tenet of yours, overturn Mr. Henry's doctrine about the necessity of the flow, " gradual" destruction of indwelling fin? May not T 3

in finner BELIEVE in A MOMENT, when God helps him to believe? And may not a believer [whom you suppose necessarily still of indwelling sin as long as he is in this world] DIE in A MOMENT?—If you answer in the negative, you deny the fudden death of John the baptist, St. James, and St. Paul, who had their heads cut off in a moment:—In a word, you deny that any believer can die fuddenly.—If you reply in the affirmative, you give up the point, and grant that indwelling sin may be instantaneously destroy'd. And now what becomes of Mr. Henry's argument, which supposes that sanctification can never be complete without a long gradual process; and that the extirpation of sin cannot take place but "by little and little?"

I have fet before thee, Reader, the hights and shades of our doctrine: I have produced our arguments, and those of our opponents; And now, fay which of them bear the stamp of imperfection? If thou pronounce that Urim and Thummim, Light and Perfection, belong to the arguments of Mr. Hill, Mr. Toplady, Mr. Martin, and Mr. Henry, I must lay by my pen, and deplore the infelicity of our having a reason, which unsays in my breast what it fays in thine. But if thou find, after mature deliberation, that our arguments are light in the Lord, as being more agreeable to the dictates of unprejudiced reason, than those of our antagonists. more conformable to the plain declarations of the facred writers, fitter to encourage believers in the way of holiness, more suitable to the nature of undefiled religion, and better adapted to the display of the Redeemer's glory; I shall enjoy the double: pleasure of embracing the Truth, and of embracing her together with thee: In the mean time, closing here the argumentative part of this Essay, I just beg the continuance of thy favourable attention, while I practically address perfect Pharifees, prejudiced Imperfectionists, imperfect Believers, and perfect Christians.

SECT.

SECTION XVII.

An Address to perfect christian pharifees.

Address you first, ye perfect christian pharises; because ye are most ready to profess christian perfection, the alas! ye stand at the greatest distance from perfect bumility, the grace which is most essential to the perfect christian's character: And because the enemies of our doctrine make use of you first, when they endeavour to root it up from the earth.

That ye may know whom I mean by perfect christian pharises, give me leave to shew you your own picture in the glass of a plain description. Ye have professedly entered into the foldwhere Christ's sheep. which are perfected in love, rest all at each other's feet, and at the feet of the Lamb of God. But, how have ye entered ?- By Chrift, the door ? or at the door of prefumption?-Not by Christ the door: for Christ is meekness and lowliness manifested in the flesh; but ye are still ungentle and fond of praise. When he pours out his foul as a divine prophet, he fays, Learn of me, for I am MEEK and LOWLY IN HEART: Take my yoke upon you, and ye shall find rest unto your souls. But ye overlook this humble door. Your proud, gigantic minds are above stooping low enough to follow him, who made himself of no reputation that he might raise us to heavenly honours; and who, to pour just contempt upon human pride, had his first night's lodging in a stable, and spent his last night partly on the cold ground in a florm of divine wrath, and partly in an ignominious confinement, exposed to the greatest indignities, which jews and gentiles could pour upon him. He rested his infant head upon hay, his dying head upon thorns, A manger

was his cradle and a cross his death-bed. Thirty years he travelled from the fordid stable to the accursed tree, unnoticed by his own peculiar people. In the brightest of his days poor sistermen, some Galilean women, and a company of shouting children, formed all his retinue. Shepherds were his first attendants, and malesactors his last companions.

His first Beatitude was, Bleffed are the poor in fpirit; and the last, Bleffed are ye, when men Shall revile you, and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake. His first doctrine was Repent: Nor was the last unlike to it; If I have washed your feet, ye ought also to wash one another's feet. for I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you .- He that will be first among you, let bim be the last of all. Now far from practifing with godly fincerity this last lesson of our humble Lord, ye do not fo much as truly relish the first. Ye do not delight in, nay, ye abhor penitential poverty of fpirit. Your humility is not cordial, and wrought into your nature by grace; but complimental, and woven into your carriage by art. Ye are humble in looks, in gestures, in voice, in dress, in behaviour; so far as external humility helps you to fecure the reputation of perfect christians, at which ye aspire from a motive of pharifaic ambition: but ye continue strangers to the childlike simplicity, and unaffected brokenness of Christ's perfect disciples. Ye are the very reverse of the Ifraelites in whom there is no guile. Ye refemble the artful Gibeonites, who, for a time, imposed upon Joshua's artless simplicity. Your feigned profession of special grace deceives those of God's children, who have more of the fimplicity of the dove than of the ferpent's wisdom. Ye chuse the lowest place, but ye do not love it. If ye chearfully take it, it is not among your equals, but among your inferiors; because you think that such a condescending step may raise the credit of your humility, without endangering your superiority: If ye stoop, and go down, it is not because ye see yourfelves unworthy of the feat of honour; but because ye hope, that people will by and by fay to you, Come up bigber. Your pharitaic cunning aims at wearing at once the coronet of genuine humility, and the crown of felf-exalting pride. Ye love to be esteemed of men for your goodness and devotion: Ye want to be admired for your exactness, zeal, and gracious attainments. The pride of the jewish pharifees was coarfe in comparison of yours. They wore the rough garment, and you wear the filks of spiritual vanity: And even when ye dye them in the blood of the Lamb, which you extol in word, it is to draw the confidence of humble christians by your christian appearance and language, more than to follow the propenfity of a new nature, which loves to be clothed with humility, and feels itself in its own center, when it rests in deep poverty of spirit, and sees that God is all in all.

One of the greatest ends of Christ's coming into the world, was to empty us of ourselves, and to fill us with humble love; but ye are flill full of yourfelves, and void of Christ, that is, void of humility incarnate. Ye still aim at some wrong mark: whether it be felf-glory, felf-interest, felf-pleasure, felfparty, or felf-applause. In a word, one felfish fcheme or another, contrary to the pure love of God and of your neighbour, fecretly destroys the root of your profession, and may be compared to the unseen worm, that ate the root of Jonah's gourd. Ye have a narrow, contracted spirit: Ye do not gladly facrifice your private fatisfaction, your interest, your reputation, your prejudices, to the general interest of truth and love, and to the public good of the whole body of Christ. Ye are yet in secret bondage to men, places, and things. Ye do not heartily entertain the wisdom from above, which is pure, gentle, easy to be intreated, and full of mercy.-Nay, ye are above conviction: Groß finners yield to truth before you. Like Jehu, ye are zealous, and ye pretend that it is for the Lord of hosts: but alas! it is for your opinions, your party.

party, your honour. In a word, ye do not walk in constant, solemn expectation of death and judgement: Your will is not broken: your carnal considence is yet alive: The heavenly dove does not sit in your breast: Self, wrapt up in the cloak of humility, is still set up in your heart; and in secret you serve that cursed idol more than God. Satan transformed into an angel of light has artfully led you to the profession of christian persection thro' a circle of external performances, thro' glorious forms of doctrine in the letter, and thro' a fair show of zeal for complete holines: The Lord, to punish your formality, has in part given you up to your delusion: And now, ye as much believe yourselves persect christians, as the pharisees, in our Lord's days, believed themselves persect jews.

days, believed themselves perfect jews. Mr. Welley, in his Plain Account of christian perfection, has borne his faithful testimony against fuch witnesses of perfect love as ye are. If ye def-' Others pife this address, regard his remarks. [fays he] who think they have the direct witness of their being renewed in love, are nevertheless ' manifestly wanting in the fruit. - Some are un-' doubtedly wanting in long-suffering, christian re-' fignation. They do not see the hand of God in whatever occurs, and chearfully embrace it. ' They do not in every thing give thanks, and re-' joice evermore. They are not happy: at least of not always happy. For sometimes they complain. "They fay, "This is hard!"-Some are wanting in gentleness. They refist evil, instead of turning the other cheek. They do not receive reproach with gentleness; no, nor even reproof. Nay, they are not able to bear contradiction without the appearance, at least, of resentment. If they are reproved, or contradicted, tho' mildly, they do not take it well. They behave with more ' distance and reserve than they did before, &c .-Some are wanting in goodness. They are not kind, mild, fweet, amiable, foft, and loving at all times, in their spirit, in their words, in their

6 look, in their air, in the whole tenor of their be-' haviour; and that to all, high and low, rich and poor, without respect of persons: particu-' larly to them that are out of the way, to oppofers, and to those of their own houshold. They do not ' long, study, endeavour by every means, to make all about hem happy.—Some are wanting in fidelity, a nice regard to truth, fimplicity, and godly fincerity. Their love is hardly without fomething like guile is found diffimulation; in their mouth. To avoid roughness they lean to the other extreme. They are smooth to an excess, so as scarce to avoid a degree of fawning. -Some are wanting in meekness, quietness of spirit, composure, evenness of temper. They are up and down, fometimes high, fometimes low; their mind is not well balanced. Their affections are either not in due proportion; they have too much of the one, too little of the other: or they are not duly mixt and tempered together, fo as to counterpoise each other. Hence there Their foul is out of tune, and is often a jar. cannot make the true harmony.—Some are wanting in temperance. They do not steadily use that kind and degree of food, which they know, or ' might know, would most conduce to the health, ftrength, and vigour of the body. Or they are ' not temperate in fleep: they do not rigoroully adhere to what is best for body and mind.—They " use neither fasting nor abstinence." &c. I have described your delusion: but who can describe it's fatal consequences? Who can tell the

I have described your delution: but who can describe it's fatal consequences? Who can tell the mischief it has done, and continues to do? The sew sincere perfectionists, and the multitude of captious impersectionists, have equally found you out. The former are grieved for you; and the latter tri-

umph thro' you.

When the fincere perfectionists consider the inconsistency of your profession, they are ready to give up their faith in Christ's all-cleaning blood.

and their hope of getting a clean heart in this life, They are tempted to follow the multitude of profeffors, who fit themselves down in felf-imputed righteouiness, or in folifidian notions of an ideal perfection in Christ. And it is well if some of them have not already yielded to the temptation, and begun to fight against the hopes, which they once entertained of loving God with all their heart. It is well if fome, thro' you, have not been led to fay; 'I once sweetly enjoy'd the thought of do-' ing the will of God on earth, as it is done in heaven. Once I hopefully prayed, God would ' fo cleanse my heart, that I might PERFECTLY · love him, and worthily magnify his holy aname in this world. But now I have renounced · my hopes, and I equally abhor the doctrine of · evangelical PERFECTION, and that of evangelical worthiness. I have made a firm agreement with fin. It SHALL dwell in my heart fo long as 4 my foul shall dwell in my body. Neither the word onor the spirit of Christ shall eject it. When I was a young convert, I believed that Christ could really make an end of all moral pollution, cast out the man of fin, and cleanse us from heart-fin, 4 as well as from outward iniquity in this life: but 4 I foon met with unhumbled, felf-willed people, 4 who boldly stood up for this glorious liberty, and · made me question the truth of the doctrine. Nay. in process of time, I found that some of those who most confidently professed to have attained this falvation were farther from the gentleness, fimplicity, catholic spirit, and unfeigned humi-Ity of Christ, than many believers, who had · never confidered the doctrine of christian per-4 fection. These offences striking in with some disappointments which I myself met with, in ' feebly feeking the pearl of perfect love, made me conclude that it can no more be found than the ' philosopher's stone, and that they are all either ' tools or knaves, who fet believers upon feeking it. And now I every where decry the doctrine of perfection

perfection as a dangerous delution. I fet people against it wherever I go; and my zeal in this respect has been attended with the greatest success. I have damp'd the hopes of many perfectionists; and I have profelyted several to the doctrine of christian imperfection. With them I now quietly wait to be purified from indwelling sin in the arricle of death, and to be made perfect in another world, not only in duty to my parents, in loyalty to the king, in charity to the poor, and love to my wife; but also in patience towards those who cross my will, and in love to all my enemies.

This abfurd speech is, I fear, the language of many hearts, altho it does not openly drop from many lips. Thus are you, O ye perfect pharifees, the great instruments, by which the Tempter tears away the shield of those unsettled Israelites, who look more at your inconsistencies, than they do at the beauty of holiness, the promise of God, the

blood of Christ, and the power of the spirit. But this is not all, as ye destroy the budding faith of fincere perfectionists, so ye strengthen the unbelief of the folifidians. Thro you their prejudices are grown up into a fixed detellation of chriftian perfection. Ye have hardened them in their error, and furnished them with plausible arguments to destroy the truth which ye contend for. Did ye never hear their triumphs? 'Ha! ha! So would we have it! These are some of the people who fland up for finless perfection! They are all alike. Did not I tell you, that you would find them out to be no better than temporary monflers? What monstrous pride? What touchiness, obsti-' nacy, bigotry, and stoicism characterizes them! How do they strain at gnats and swallow carnels! I had rather be an open drunkard than a perfectionist. Publicans and harlots shall enter into the kingdom of heaven before them.'-Thefe are the cutting speeches to which your glaring inconfishency, and the severe prejudices of our oppo-

nents

nents give birth. Is it not deplorable that your tempers should thus drive men to abhor the doctrine

which your lips recommend!

And what do ye get by thus dispiriting the real friends of christian perfection, and by furnishing its fworn enemies with fuch sharp weapons against it? Think ye that the mischief ye do shall not recoil upon yourselves? Is not Christ the same yesterday, to day, and for ever? If he detested the perfect pharifailm of unhumbled jews, will he admire the perfect felf-righteousness of aspiring christians? If he formerly refifted the proud, and gave grace to the bumble, what reason have ye to hope that he will submit to your spiritual pride, and reward your religious oftentation with a crown of glory? Ye perhaps cry out against antinomianism, and I commend you for it: but are ye not deeply tainted with the worst fort of antinomianism,—that which starches, stiffens, and swells the soul? Ye justly bear your testimony against those who render the law of Christ of none effect to believers, by degrading it into a rule, which they strip of the punitive and remunerative fanctions, with which it stands armed in the facred records. But are ye not doubly guilty, who maintain that this law is still in force as a law, and nevertheless refuse to pay it fincere, internal obedience? For when ye break the first commandment of Christ's evangelical law, by practically discarding penitential poverty of spirit; and when ye transgress the last, by abhorring the lowest place, by disdaining to wash each other's feet, and by refufing to prefer others in honour before your. selves; are ye not guilty of breaking all the law, by breaking it in one point—in the capital point of humble love, which runs thro' all the parts of the law, as vital blood does thro' all the parts of the body? O how much more dangerous is the case of an unbumbled man, who stiffly walks in robes of felf-made perfection, than that of an humble man, who, thro' prejudice and the force of example meekly walks in robes of felf-imputed rightcoufness! Behold'

Behold, thou callest thyself a perfect christiant, and restest in the evangelical law of Christ, which is commonly called the gospel: Thou makest thy boast of God; and knowest his will, and approvest the things that are more excellent, even the way of christian perfection, being instructed out of the gospel; and art consident that thou thyself art a. guide of the blind, a light of them who are in darkness, an instructor of the foolish, and a teacher of babes, or imperfect believers; having the form of knowledge and of the truth in the gospel. Thou therefore who teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? Thou that preachest another should not break the law of Christ, thro' breaking it dishonourest thou God? For the name of God is blasphemed thro' you, among those who seek an occafion to blafpheme it. See Rom. ii. 17, &c. And think ye that ye shall escape the righteous judgment of God? Has Christ no woes but for jewish pharifees? O be no longer mistaken. Before ye are punished by being here given up to a reprobate mind, and by being hereafter cast into the hell of hypocrites, the outer darkness where there will be more weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth than in any other hell !- before ye are overtaken by the awful hour of death, and the dreadful day of judgment; practically learn, that christian perfection is the mind which was in Christ; -especially his humble, meek, quiet mind;—his gentle, free, loving fpirit. Aim at it by finking into deep felfabhorrence; and not by ufing, as ye have hitherto done, the empty talk and profession of christian perfection, as a step to reach the top of spiritual pride.

Mistake me not: I do not blame you for holding the doctrine of christian perfection, but for wilfully missing the only way which leads to it; I mean the humble, meek, and loving Jesus, who says, I am the way, and the door: By me if any man enter in, he shall be saved into so great salvation. He that entereth not by this door into this sheep-fold, but climbeth

up fame other way; [and especially he that climbeth by the way of pharifaic formality } the fame is a thief and a robber: He that robs Christ of his glory, and pretends to what he has no more right. to, than a thief has to your property. Would ye then be right? Do not cast away the doctrine of an evangelically-finless holiness; but contend more for it with your heart than with your lips. With all your foul press after such a perfection as Christ, St. Paul, and St. John taught and exemplified; a perfection of meekness and humble love. Earnestly believe all the woes which the gospel denounces against self-righteous pharisees, and all the bleffings which it promifes to perfect penitents. Drink less into the letter, and more into the spirit. Thirst after the gentle and humble spirit of Christ. till, like a fountain of living water, it fpring up to everlasting life in your heart. Ye have climbed to the pharifaic perfection of Saul of Tarfus, when touching the righteousness of the law, he was blameless. Would ye now attain the evangelical perfection. which he was possessed of, when he faid, Let us, as many as are perfect, be thus minded? Only follow. him thro' the regeneration: Fall to the dust before God: Rife conscious of the blindness of your heart, meekly deplore it with penitential shame: And if you follow the directions laid down in the third address, I doubt not but, dangerous as your case is at present, you will be, like St. Paul, as eminent for christian perfection, as you have hitherto been for pharifaic holiness.



SECTION XVIII.

An Address to prejudiced Imperfectionists.

I fear that, next to the persons whom I have just addressed, ye injure the cause of holiness, O ye believers, who have been deluded into doctrinal antinomianism, by the bad arguments which are answered in the preceding pages. Permit me therefore to address you next; nor suffer prejudice to make you throw away this exposulation, before

you have granted it a fair perufal.

Ye directly or indirectly plead for the necessary continuance of indwelling fin in your own hearts, and in the hearts of all true christians. But may I be fo bold as to ask, Who gave you leave so to do? And when were ye commissioned to propagate this unholy gospel? Was it at your baptism, when ye were ranked among Christ's foldiers, and received a christian name, in token that ye would keep God's boly will and commandments all the days of your life?—and that you would not be asbamed to fight manfully against the world, the flesh, and the devil unto your life's end? Are not these three enemies strong enough, fufficiently to exercise your patience, and try your warlike skill to the last? Did your sponfors promife for you that you would quarter a fourth enemy, called indwelling fin, in your very breaft, lest ye should not have enemies enough to fight against? On the contrary, were ye not exhorted " utterly to abolish the whole body of fin?" If fo; is it not strange, that ye should spend part of your precious time in pleading, under various pretexts. for the prefervation of heart-fin, a fin this, which gives life, warmth and vigor, to the whole body of fin? And is it not deplorable, that, instead of confcientiously fulfilling your baptismal engagements, ye should attack those, who desire to fulfil them by uterly abolishing the whole body of fire? U 3. Bus

But yeare, perhaps, ministers of the established church: And, in this case, I ask, When did the Bishop send you upon this strange warfare? Was it at your confirmation, in which he bound upon you your folemn obligations to keep God's boly will and commandments, fo as utterly to abolish the whole body of fin? Is it probable that he commissioned you to pull down what he confirmed; and to demolish the perfection, which he made you vow to attain, and to walk in all the days of your life? If the Bishop gave you no fuch commission at your confirmation, did he do it at your ordination, when he faid, Receive authority to preach the word of God? Is there no difference between the word of God, which cuts. up all fin, root and branch; and the word of Satan, which afferts the propriety of the continuance of heart-fin during term of life?—If not: Did the Bistop do it when he exhorted and charged you " never to cease your labour, care, and diligence, " till you have done all that lieth in you, to bring " all fuch as are committed to your charge, to " that agreement of faith, and that perfectness of " age in Christ, that there shall be no place left. " among you, for error in religion or viciousneis " in life;"—that is, I apprehend, till the truthof the gospel, and the love of the spirit, have perfectly purified the minds, and renewed the hearts, of all your hearers?

How can ye, in all your confessions and sacramental offices, renounce sin, the accursed thing which God abhors, and which obedient believers, detest; and yet plead for its life, its strength, its constant energy, so long as we are in this world? We could better bear with you, if ye appropriated an hand or a foot, an eye or an ear to sin during term of life: But who can bear your pleas for the necessary continuance of sin in the HEART? Is it not enough that this murderer of Christ, and all mankind rambles about the walls of the city? Will ye still infinuate that he must have the citadel to the last, and keep it garrison'd with filthy lusts, base affections.

affections, bad tempers, or "diabolonians," who, like prisoners, show themselves at the grate; and "like snakes, toads, and wild beasts, are the siercer for being confined:" Who has taught you thus to represent Christ as the Keeper, and not the Descriptions? If believers are truly willing to get rid of sin, but cannot, because Christ has bolted their hearts with an adamantine decree, which prevents sin from being turned out:—if he has irrevocably given leave to indwelling sin, to quarter for life in every christian's heart, as the king of France in the last century, gave leave to his dragoons to quarter for some months in the houses of the poor oppressed protestants; who does not see that Christ may be called the prosecutor of in-

divelling fin, rather than its enemy?

Ye abfurdly complain that the doctrine of chriftian perfection does not exalt our Saviour, becauseit represents him as radically faving his obedient people from their indwelling for in this life. But are ye not guilty of the very error which ye charge upon us, when ye infinuate that he cannot or will' not fay to our inbred fins, Those mine enemies which will not that I should reign over them, bring bither, and flay them before me? It a common judge has power to pass sentence of death upon all the robbers, and murderers who are properly profecuted; and if they are hang'd and destroy'd in a few days,. weeks, or months, in confequence of his fentence; how strangely do ye reflect upon Christ, and revive the Agag within us, when Ye infinuate, that he [the Judge of all] who was manifested for this very purpose; that be might destroy the works of the devil, to far forgets his errand, that he never defirous indwelling fin in one of his willing people, so long as they are in this world; altho' that fin is the capital, and most mischievous work of the devil?

Your doctrine of the necessary continuance of indwelling fin in all faithful believers, traduces not only the fon of man, but also the adorable Trinity. The Eather gives his only begotten Son, his

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Maac, to be crucified, that the ram Sin may be offered up and flain: but you infinuate that the life of that cursed ram is secured by a decree, which allots it the heart of all believers for a safe retreat, and a warm stable, so long as we are in this world. You represent the Son as an almighty Saviour, who offers to make us free from fin; and yet appoints, that the galling yoke of indwelling fin shall remain tied to, and bound upon our very hearts for life. Ye describe the Holy Ghost as a fanctifier, who applies Christ's all-cleanfing blood to the believer's heart; filling it with the oil of holiness and gladness: and yet ye suppose, that our hearts must necessarily remain desperately wicked, and full of indwelling fin! Is it right to pour contempt upon christianity, by charging such inconfultencies upon Father, Son, and Holy Ghost?

It can hardly be expected, that those who thusmitrepresent their God, should do their neighbour justice. Hence the liberty which ye take, to fix a blot upon the most holy characters. What have the prophets and apostles done to you, that ye should represent them, not only as men who had an heart partly evil to the last, but also as advocates for the necessary indwelling of fin in all believers till death? And why do ye to eagerly take your advantage of boly Paul in particular, and catch at a figurative mode of speech, to infinuate, that he was a carnal wretch, sold under fin, even when he expected a crown of righteousness at the hand of his righteous judge, for having finished bis course with the just men made perfect?-Nay, what have we done to you, that ye should endeavour to take from us the greatest comfort we have in fighting against the remains of fin? Why will ye deprive us of the pleasing and purifying hope of taking the Jericho which we encompals, and killing the Goliath whom we attack ?- And what has indwelling fin done for you, that ye should still plead for the propriety of its continuance in our hearts? Is it not the root of all outward fin, and the fpring of all the streams of iniquity.

of the globe? If ye hate the fruit, why do ye fo eagerly contend for the necessary continuance of the root? And if ye favour godliness [for many of you undoubtedly do] why do you put such a conclusive argument as this in the mouths of the wicked: "These good men contend for the pro"priety of indivelling fin, that grace may abound:
"And why should we not plead for the propriety of outward fin for the same important reason?
"Does not God approve of an honest heart, ...
"which scorns to cloke inward iniquity with out-

" ward demureness?"

Mr./ Hill has lately published an ingenious Dialogue, called a last at enthusiasm, in which, Page 26, he uses an argument against pleading for lakeevarmness, which, with very little variation, may be retorted against his pleading for indwelling fin-Suffer me, fays he, to put the fentiments of fuch " persons [as plead for the middle way of luke-" warmness into the form of a prayer, which we 44 may suppose would run in some such expressions as the following. O Lord, thy word requires "that I should love thee with all my heart, with. " all my mind, with all my foul, and with all my 44 strength, that I should renounce the world, 15 [and indwelling fin] " and should present myself as " an holy, reasonable, and lively facrifice unto " thee; but Lord these are such over righteous extremes," [and such beights of finless perfection] as I cannot away with: Therefore grant that " thy love, and a moderate share of the love of " the world" [or of inducting fin] " may both reign" [or at least continue] " in my heart at " once. I ask it for Jesus Christ's sake, Amen." -Mr. Hill justly adds, " Now dear Madam, if " you are shock dat such a petition, consider that it is the exact language of your own heart, whilst you can plead for what you call the middle " way of religion." And I beg leave to take up his own argument, and to add with equal propriety, NOW.

Now dear Sirs, if you are shock'd at such a petition, consider that it is the exact language of your own hearts, whilst ye can plead for what ye call indwelling fin, or the remains of sin."

Nor can I see what ye get by such a conduct. The excruciating thorn of indwelling sin sticks in your hearts: We affert that Christ can and will extract it, if ye plead his promise of santisfying you wholly, in soul, body, and spirit. But ye say, "This cannot be: The thorn must "stay in, "till death extract it: And the leprosy shall cleave to the walls till the house is demolished." Just as if Christ, by radically cleaning the lepers in the days of his sless, had not given repeated proofs of the absurdity of your argument! Just as if part of the gospel was not, The lepers are cleansed, and If the San make you free, you shall be free indeed!

If ye get nothing in pleading for christian imperfection, permit me to tell you what you lose by it, and what ye might get by steadily going on to

perfection.

(1) If ye earnestly aimed at christian perfection, ye would have a bright testimony in your own foul, that you are fincere, and that ye walk agreeably to your baptifmal engagements. I have already observed, that some of the most pious Calvinists doubt, if those who do not pursue christian persection are christians at all. Hence it follows, that the more earnestly you pursue it, the stronger will be your confidence, that you are upright christians: And when ye shall be perfected in love, ye shall have that evidence of your fincerity, which will perfectly cast out servile fear which has torment, and nourish the filial fear which has fafety and delight. It is hard to conceive how we can constantly enjoy the full affurance of faith out of the state of christian perfection. For fo long as a christian inwardly breaks Christ's evangelical law, he is justly condemn'd in his own conscience. If his heart does not condemn him for it, it is merely because he

is afleep in the lap of antinomianism. On the other hand, says St. John, If our beart condemnus, God is greater than our beart, and knoweth all things that make for our condemnation. But if we love indeed and in truth, which none but the perfect do at all times, bereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall Assure our hearts before him. 1 John

iii, 19, 20.

(2) The perfect christian, who has left all to follow Christ, is peculiarly near and dear to God. He is, if I may use the expression, one of God's favourites; and his prayers are remarkably an-This will appear to you indubitable, if ye can receive the testimony of these who are perfected in obedient love. Beloved, fay they, whatfoever we ask, we receive of him; BECAUSE we keep his commandments, and do those things which are pleasing in bis fight; that is, because we are persected in obedient love. 1 John. iii, 22. This peculiar bleffing ye lose by despising christian perfection. Nay, so great is the union which fubfifts between God and the perfect members of his Son, that it is compared to dwelling in God, and having God dwelling in us in such a manner, that the Father, the Son, and the Comforter are faid to make their abode with as. At that day [when ye shall be perfected in one | ye Shall know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. - If a man love me, be will keep my words; and my Father will love him; and we will come to bim, and make our ABODE with bim. John xiv. 20, 23,-Again: He that keepeth God's commanaments dwelleth in God, and God in bim. 1 John iii. 24 .- Ye are my [dearest] friends, if ye do whatfoever I command you: [i. e. if ye attain the perfection of your dispensation] John xv, 14.—Once more: Keep my commandments, and I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another comforter that be may ABIDE with you for ever. John, xiv. 15, 16. From these scriptures it appears, that, under every dispensation, the perfect, or they who keep the commandments, have unspeakable advantages, from which the lovers of imperfection debar themselves. (3) Ye

(3) Ye bring far less glory to God in the state of indwelling fin, than ye would do if ye were perfected in love; for perfect christians [all things being equal] glorify God more than those who remain full of inbred iniquity. Hence it is, that in the very chapter where our Lord fo strongly preffes christian perfection upon his disciples, he says, Let your light so Shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in beaven, Mat. v. 16 .- For, Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit. John xv. 8. It is true that the fruit of the perfect is not always relifhed by men, who judge only according to appearances: but God, who judges righteous judgment, finds it rich and precious: And therefore the two mites which the poor widow gave with a chearful and perfect heart, were more precious in his account, and brought him more glory, than all the money which the imperfect worthippers cast into the treasury, tho' some of them cast in much. Hence also our Lord commanded that the work of perfect love, which Mary wrought, when she anointed his feet for his burial, should be told for a memorial of ber, wherever this [the christian] gospel should be preached in the whole world. Such is the honour, which the Lord puts upon the branches in him that bear fruit to perfection!

(4) The perfect christian [all things being equal] is a more useful member of society than the imperfect. Never will ye be such humble men, such good parents, such dutiful children, such loving brothers, such loyal subjects, such kind neighbours, such indulgent husbands, and such saithful friends, as when ye shall have obtained the perfect sincerity of obedience. Ye will then, in your degree, have the simplicity of the gentle dove, the patience of the laborious ox, the courage of the magnanimous lion, and the wisdom of the wary serpent, without any of its poison. In your little sphere of action ye will abound in the work of faith, the patience of hope, and the labour of

love, far more than ye did before: For a field properly weeded, and cleared from briars, is naturally more fruitful than one, which is fhaded by fpreading brambles, or filled with the indvelling roots of noxious weeds; it being a capital mistake of the fpiritual husbandmen, who till the Lord's field in mystical Geneva, to suppose that the plant of humility thrives best, when the roots of indvel-

ling fins are twisted around it's root.

"(c) None but just men made perfect are meet to be made partakers of the inheritance among the faints in light; an inheritance this, which no man is fit for, till he has purified bimself from all filtbiness of the flesh and fpirit. If modern divines therefore, affure you, that a believer full of indwelling fin has a full title to heaven, believe them not; for the Holy Ghost has faid, that the believer who breaks the law of liberty in one point, is guilty of all, and that no defilement Shall enter into heaven : And our Lord himself has affured us, that the PURE IN HEART Shall fee God, and that they who were ready for that fight, event in with the bridegroom to the marriage-feast of the lamb. And who is ready? Undoubtedly the believer whose lamp is trimmed and burning. But is a spiritual lamp trimmed, when its flame is darkened by the black fungus of indwelling fin? Again: Who shall be faved into glory, but the man whose beart is evalued from iniquity? But is that heart washed, which continues full of indwelling corruption? Wo be therefore to the heathens, jews, and christians, who trifle away the accepted time, and die out of a flate of heathen, jewish, or christian perfection! They have no chance of going to heaven, but thro' the purgatory preached by the heathens, the papifts, and the calvinists. And should the notions of these purgatories be groundless, it unavoidably follows, that unpurged or imperfect fouls must, at death, rank with the unready fouls, whom our Lord calls feeligh virgins, and against whom the door of heaven will be fout. How awful is this confideration, my dear brethren!

brethren! How should it make us stretch every nerve till we have attained the perfection of our dispensation! I would not encourage tormenting fears in an unscriptural manner; but I should rejoice if all who call Jesus, Lord, would mind his solemn declarations; I say unto you, my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, &c. but I will forewarn you whom you shall fear: Fear him, who after be bath killed, bath power to cast into bell: Yea I say unto you fear him, who will burn in the fire of wrath, those who harbour the indwelling man of sin, lest he should be utterly consumed by the fire of love.

Should ye cry out against this doctrine, and ask if all imperfect christians are in a damnable state? We reply that fo long as a christian believer fincerely presses after christian perfection, he is safe; because he is in the way of duty, and were he to die at midnight, before midnight God would certainly bring him to christian perfection, or bring christian perfection to him; for we are consident of this very thing, that be, who hath begun a good work in them, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ, because they work out their own salvation with fear and trembling. But if a believer falls, loiters, and rests upon former experiences; depending upon a self-made, pharifaical perfection, or upon a felfimputed, antinomian perfection; our chief message to him is that of St. Paul, Awake, thou that Sleepest, -Awake to righteousness and fin not, for thou hast not the heart-purifying knowledge of God, which is eternal life. Arise from the dead: Call for oil, and Christ will give thee light. Otherwise thou shalt share the dreadful fate of the lukewarm Laodiceans, and of the foolish virgins, whose lamps went out, instead of shining more and more to the perfect day.

(6) This is not all: As ye will be fit for judgement, and a glorious heaven, when ye shall be perfected in love; so you will actually enjoy a gracious heaven in your own soul. You will possess swithin you the kingdom of God, which consists in

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fettled righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghoft. But fo long as ye neglect christian perfection, and continue fold under indwelling fin, ye not only rift the loss of the heaven of heavens, but ye lose a little heaven upon earth: for perfect christians are fo full of peace and love, that they triumph in Christ with joy unspeakable and full of glory, and rejoice in tribulation, with a patience which bas its perfect work. Yea, they count it all joy when they fall into divers trials: And fuch is their deadness to the world. that they are exceeding glad, when men fay all manner of evil of them falfly for Chrift's fake. How defirable is fuch a state! And who, but the blessed above. can enjoy an happiness superior to that of him who can fay, I am ready to be offered up. The fling of death is fin, and the strength of fin is the law: but, O death, where is thy fling? Not in my heart, fince the righteoufness of the law is fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit;-Not in my mind, for to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Now this peculiar happiness ye lose, so long as ye continue imperfect christians.

(7) But, supposing a christian, who dies in a flate of christian imperfection, can escape damnation. and make fhift to get to heaven; it is certain that he cannot go into the glorious manfion of perfect christians, nor shine among the stars of the first magnitude. The wish of my soul is, that, if God's wisdom has so ordered it, impersect christians may one day rank among perfect jews, or perfect heathens. But even upon this supposition, what will they do with their indwelling fin? For a perfect gentile, and a perfect jew, are without guile according to their light, as well as a perfect christian. Lean not then to the doctrine of the propriety, and continuance of indwelling fin till death ;-a doctrine this, on which a Socrates or a Melchifedec, would be afraid to venture his heathen perfection, and eternal falvation. On the contrary, by christian perfection ye may rife to the brightest crowns of righteouinels, and shine like the fun in the kingdom of your

Father. O for a noble ambition to obtain one of the first feats in glory! O for a constant, evangelical ftriving, to have the most abundant entrance ministered unto you into the kingdom of God! O for a throne among those peculiarly redeemed faints, who fing the new fong, which none can learn but themfelves! It is not Christ's to give those exalted thrones out of mere distinguishing grace: No: They may be forfeited; for they shall be given to those for whom they are prepared; and they are prepared for them, who [evangelically-speaking] are worthy. They shall walk with me in white, for they ARE WORTHY, fays Christ; and they shall sit at my right band, and at my left in my kingdom, who shall be worthy of that honour: for them that honour me, jays the Lord, I will bonour .- Behold I come quickly: My reward is with me, and I will render to every man according to his works. And what reward, think ye, will Christ give you, O my dear, mistaken brethren, if he finds you still passing jests upon the doctrine of christian perfection, which he so strongly recommends?-Still pleading for the continuance of indwelling fin, which he fo greatly abhors?

(8) Your whole fystem of indwelling sin and imputed perfection stands upon two of the most dangerous and false maxims which were ever advanced. The first, which begets antinomian presumption, runs thus, "Sin cannot destroy us either in this world or in the world to come:" And the second which is productive of antinomian despair, is "Sin cannot be destroy'd in this world." O how hard is it for those who worship where these Syren-songs pass for sweet songs of Sion, not to be drawn into one of these fatal conclusions? "What need is there of attacking sin with so much eagerness, since, even in the name of the Lord, I cannot

destroy it? And why should I resist it with so much watchfulness, since my eternal life and falvation are absolutely secured, and the most

of poisonous cup of iniquity cannot destroy me, the I should drink of it every day for months.

ther go backward into a finful, curfed Egypt, nor yet go forward into a finful, curfed Egypt, nor yet go forward into a finful, curfed Egypt, nor yet go forward into a finles, holy Canaan; how natural will it be for you to say, Soul, take thy ease, and rest a while in this wilderness on the pillow of self-imputed perfection? Oh! how many are surprised by the midnight cry in this Laodicean rest! What numbers meet death with a solifidian Lord! Lord! in their mouths, and with indwelling sin in their hearts! And how inexpressible will be our horror, if we perceive our want of holiness, and christian perfection, only when it will be too late.

to attain them ! To conclude ::

(0) Indwelling fir is not only the fling of death, but the very hell of hells, if I may use the expresfion: For a finless faint in a local hell, would dwell in an holy, loving God; and, of confequence, in a spiritual heaven: Like Shadrach in Nebuchadnezzar's fiery furnace; he might have devouring flames curling about him; but, within him, he would still have the flame of divine love; and the joy of a good conscience. But so much of indwelling fin as we carry about us, so much of indevelling bell; -fo much of the sting, which pierces the damn'd; -- fo much of the spiritual fire, which will burn up the wicked; -fo much of the never-dying worm, which will prey upon them; -- so much of the dreadful instrument, which will rack them; -- fo much of Satan's image, which will frighten them; -fo much of the characteristick, by which the devil's children shall be distinguished from the children of God; -- fo much of the black mark, whereby the goats shall be separated from the sheep. To plead therefore for the continuance of indwelling fin, is not better than to plead for keeping in your hearts one of the sharpes stings of death, and one of the hottest coals in hell-fire. On the other hand, to attain christian perfection is to have the last feature of Belial's image erafed from your loving fouls, . the last bit of the sting of death extracted from your composed breasts, and the last spark of hell-fire extinguished in your peaceful bosoms. It is to X 35

enter into the spiritual rest, which remains on earth for the people of God; -a delightful rest this, where your foul will enjoy a calm, in the midst of outward storms; and where your spirit will no longer be toffed by the billows of fwelling pride, diffatisfied avarice, pining envy, disappointed hopes, fruitless cares, dubious anxiety, turbulent anger, fretting impatience, and racking unbelief. It is to enjoy that even state of mind, in which all things will work together for your good. There your love will bear its excellent fruits during the sharpest winter of affliction, as well as in the finest fummer of prosperity. There you will be more and more settled in peaceful humility. There you will continually grow in an holy familiarity with the friend of penitent finners; and your prospect of eternal felicity will brighten every day*.

Innumerable are the advantages which established, perfect christians have over carnal, unsettled believers, who continue sold under indwelling sin. And will ye despise those blessings to your dying day, O ye prejudiced impersectionists? Will ye secure to yourselves the contrary curses? Nay, will ye entail them upon the generations which are yet unborn, by continuing to print, preach, or argue for the continuance of indwelling sin, the capital woe belonging to the devil and his angels? God forbid! We hope better things from you; not doubting but the error of several of you lies chiefly in your judgment and springs from a misunderstanding of

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^{*} If the arguments and expostulations contained in these sheets are rational and scriptural; Is not Mr. Wesley in the right, when he says, that "All Preachers should make a point, of speaching perfection to believers, constantly, strongly, and explicitly: "And that "All believers should mind this one thing, and continually agonize for it?" And do not all the ministers, who preach against christian perfection, preach against the perfection of christianity, oppose holiness, result the sanctifying truth as it is in Jesus, recommend an unscriptural purgatory, plead for fin, instead of striving against it, and delude imperfect christians into Laodicean ease?

the queition, rather than from a malicious opposition to that holine's, without which no man shall fee the Lord. With pleasure we remember, and follow St. Jude's loving direction: Of fome [the fimple-hearted, who are feduced into antinomianilm] bave compassion; making a difference: And others [the bigots and obtlinate feducers, who wilfully that their eyes against the truth] fave with fear; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh; altho' they will not be ashamed to plead for the continuance of a defiling fountain of carnality in the very heart of all God's people. We are fully perfuaded, my dear brethren, that we should wrong you, if we did not acknowledge, that many of you have a fincere defire to be faved by Christ into all purity of heart and life; and with regard to fuch imperfectionists, our chief complaint is, that their

defire is not according to knowledge.

If others of you, of a different stamp, should laugh at these pages; and [still producing banter instead of argument] should continue to fay, "Where are your perfect christians? Shew us but one, and we will believe your doctrine of perfection:" I shall just put them in mind of St. Peter's awful prophecy: Know this first, that there Shall come in the last days scoffers walking after their own [indwelling] lufts, and faying, Where is the promife of his spiritual coming [to make an end of fin, throughly to purge his floor, and to burn the chaff with unquenchable fire?] For fince the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning: All believers are still carnal and fold under fin as well as father Paul.—And if fuch mockers continue to display their prejudice by such taunts, I shall take the liberty to shew them their own picture, by pointing at those prejudiced protesfors of old, who faid, concerning the most perfect of all the perfect, "What fign showest thou, that we may rewe will believe." O the folly and danger of fuch scoffs! Bleffed is be that fitteth not in this feat of the Gornful

Yea, he is blessed next to them that fear the Lord. Yea, he is blessed next to them who are undefiled [perfect] in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord, keep his testimonies, and seek him with their WHOLE HEART. Ps. cxix. 1, 2.

Should ye ask: "To what purpose do you make all this ado about christian perfection? Do those who maintain this doctrine live more holy and useful lives than other believers?" I answer:

(1) Every thing being equal, they undoubtedly do, if they hold not the truth in unrighteousness; for the best principles, when they are cordially embraced, will always produce the best practices. But alas! too many merely contend for christian perfection in a speculative, systematical manner. They recommend it to others with their lips, as a point of doctrine which makes a part of their religious fystem; instead of following after it with their hearts, as a bleffing which they must attain, if they will not be found as unprepared for judgment as the foolish virgins. These perfectionists are, fo far, hypocrites; nor should their fatal inconfistency make us despife the truth which they contend for, any more than the conduct of thoufands, who contend for the truth of the scriptures. while they live in full opposition to the scriptures. ought to make us despise the bible.

(2) On the other hand, some gracious persons [like the pious and inconsistent antinomians, whom I have described in the preceding checks] speak against christian persection with their lips, but cannot help following hard after it with their hearts; and while they do so, they sometimes attain the thing, although they continue to quarrel with the name. These persect impersectionists undoubtedly adorn the gospel of Christ far more than the impersect, hypocritical persectionists, whom I have just described! and God, who looks at the simplicity of the heart more than at the consistency of the judgment, pities their mistakes and accepts their

works.

But (3.) Some there are, who both maintain doctrinally and practically the necessity of a perfect devotedness of ourselves to God. They hold the truth, and they hold it in wisdom and righteousness: Their tempers and conduct enforce it, as well as their words and profession. And, on this account, they have a great advantage over the two preceding classes of professors. Reason and revelation jointly crown the orthodoxy and faithfulness of these perfect perfectionifts, who neither strengthen the hands of the wicked, nor excite the wonder of the judicious, by abfurdly pleading for indwelling fin with their lips, while they strive to work righteousness with their hands and hearts.—If ye candidly weigh this three-fold distinction, I doubt not but ye will blame the irrational inconfishency of HOLY IMPERFECTIO-NISTS, condemn the immoral inconfiftency of UN-HOLY PERFECTIONISTS, and agree with me, that the most excellent christian is a consistent, Ho-LY PERFECTIONIST.

And now, my dear, mistaken brethren, take in good part these plain folutions, exposulations, and reproofs: And give glory to God by believing, that he can and will yet fave you to the uttermost from your evil tempers, if ye humbly come to him by Christ. Day and night ask of him the new heart, which keeps the commandments; and when ye shall have received it [if you keep it with all diligence] fin shall no more pollute it than it polluted our Lord's foul, when he faid, If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I bave kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love. Burn in the mean time the unhallowed pens, and bridle the rash tongues, with which ye have pleaded for the continuance of fin till death. Honour us with the right hand of fellowship; and, like reconciled brethren, let us at every opportunity lovingly fall upon our knees together, to implore the help of him, who can do far exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think. Nor let us give him any rest, till he has persected all our souls in the charity

ebarity which rejoiceth in the truth without prejudice, in the obedience which keeps the commandments without referve, and in the perseverance which finds that in keeping of them there is great reward.

Nothing but fuch a conduct as this, can remove the stumbling blocks, which the contentions ve breed have laid in the way of a deistical world. When the men whom your mistakes have hardened. will fee you listen to scripture and reason, who knows but their prejudices may fubfide, and fome: of them may yet fay, " See the good which arises from friendly controversy! See how these christians defire to be perfected in one! They now understand one another. Babylonish confusion is at an end; evangelical truth prevails; and love, the most delicious fruit of truth, visibly grows to christian perfection."-God grant that fthro' the concurrence of your candor] this may foon be the language of all those, whom the bigotry of professors has confirmed in their prejudices against christianity.

Should this plain address have so far worked upon you, my dear brethren, as to abate the sorce of your aversion to the doctrine of pure love, or to stagger your unaccountable faith in a death-purgatory; and should you seriously ask which is the way to christian perfection, I intreat you to pass on to the next section, where, I hope, you will find a scriptural answer to some important questions, which, I trust, a few of you are by this time ready to propose.



SECTION XIX.

An Address to impersed believers, who cordially embrace the doctrine of christian persection.

Y OUR regard for scripture and reason, and your desire to answer the end of God's predestination by being conformed to the image of his Son, have happily kept, or reclaimed you from

the antinomianism exposed in these sheets.

Ye fee the absolute necessity of personally fulfilling the law of Christ: Your bosom glows with defire to personal holiness in the sear of God: And far from blushing to be called personals, ye openly affert, that a persect saith productive of persect love to God and man, is the pearl of great price, for which you are determined to sell all, and which [next to Christ] you will seek early and late, as the one thing needful for your spiritual and eternal welfare. Some directions therefore, about the manner of seeking this pearl cannot but be acceptable to you, if they are scriptural and rational; and such, I humbly trust, are those which follow.

I. First, if ye would attain an evangelically-sinless persection, let your sull assent to the truth of that deep doctrine firmly stand upon the evangelical soundation of a precept and a promise. A precept without a promise would not sufficiently animate you: nor would a promise without a precept properly bind you: but a divine precept, and a divine promise form an unshaken soundation. Let then your faith deliberately rest her right soot upon these precepts.

Hear, O Ifrael,—thou Shalt love the Lord thy God with ALL THINE BEART, and with ALL THY SOUL,

SOUL, and with ALL THY MIGHT. Deut. vi, 5 .-Thou shalt not hate thy neighbour in thy beart : thou shalt in any wife rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer fin upon him. I bou Shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people: but thou Ibalt LOVE THY NEIGHBOUR AS THYSELF: I am the Lord: To Shall KEEP MY STATUTES. Lev, xix, 17, 18 .- And now, Ifrael, what does the Lord thy God REQUIRE of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in his ways, and to love him, and to serve the Lord thy God WITH ALL THY HEART, and WITH ALL THY SOUL, to KEEP THE COMMAND-MENTS of the Lord thy God, and his statutes, which I command thee this day for thy good, &c. Circumcife therefore the foreskin of your heart, and be no more stiffnecked, Deut. x, 12, &c .- Serve God with a PER-FECT HEART, and a WILLING MIND; for the Lord fearcheth all bearts, and understandeth the ima-

ginations of the thoughts, I Chr. xxviii, 9 .-

Should unbelief fuggest, that these are only oldtestament-injunctions, trample upon the false suggestion, and rest the same foot of your faith upon the following new-testament-precepts: Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets .- I say unto you, Love your enemies: Bless them that curse you: Do good to them that hate you, &c; that ye may be the children of your Father who is in heaven, &c. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? Do not even the publicans the same? - BE YE THERE-FORE PERFECT, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect. Mat. v. 17, 44, &c .- If thou will enter into life, KEEP THE COMMANDMENTS, Mat. xix. 17.—Bear ye one anothers burdens, and fo FUL-FIL THE LAW OF CHRIST, Gal. vi. 2.- This is my commandment, that ye love one another AS I HAVE LOVED YOU. John xv. 12 .- He that loveth another bath FULFILLED THE LAW: For this, Thou Shalt not commit adultery, &c. Thou shalt not covet, and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprebended in this faving, Thou Shalt LOVE THY NEIGHBOUR AS THYSELF. Love worketh no ill, &c. therefore,

therefore LOVE IS THE FULFILLING OF THE LAW, Rom. xiii. 8, 10 .- This COMMANDMENT COM bave from him, that be who love God, love his brother also, I John iv. 21 .- If ye FULFIL THE ROY-AL LAW, Thou Shalt love thy neighbour as thyfelf, ye do well. But, if ye have respect to persons, ye commit fin, and are convinced of the law as transgreffors, Jam. ii. 8, 9 .- Circumcifion is nothing, uncircumcifion is nothing [comparatively speaking] but [under Christ the KEEPING OF THE COMMANDMENTS OF God [is the one thing needful.] I Cor. vii. 19 .-For, The END OF THE COMMANDMENT is CHA-RITY; out of a PURE beart, and of a GOOD con-Science, and of FAITH UNFEIGNED. I Tim. i. 5 .-Tho' I have all faith, &c. and have not charity, I am NOTHING. I Cor. xiii. 2 .- W befoever Shall keep the whole law [of liberty] and yet offend in one point, [in uncharitable respect of persons] be is guilty of all, &c. So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty, [which requires perfect love, and therefore makes no allowance for the least degree of uncharitableness.] Jam. ii. 10. 12.

When the right foot of your faith stands on these evangelical precepts and proclamations, left she should stagger for want of a promise every way adequate to fuch weighty commandments, let her place her left foot upon the following promifes, which are extracted from the old testament. The Lord thy God will circumcife thine beart, and the beart of thy feed, to love the Lord thy God with ALL THINE HEART, and with ALL THY SOUL, THAT THOU MAYEST LIVE. Deut. xxx. 6.-Come now. and let us reason together, says the Lord: though your fins be as fearlet, they Shall be as WHITE AS SNOW: though they be red like crimfon, they shall be As WOOL, If. i. 18. That this promise chiefly refers to fanctification is evident, (1) From the verses which IMMEDIATELY precede it, Make you clean, &c. Cease to do evil, learn to do well, &c. And (2) From the verses which IMMEDIATELY follow it. If ye be willing and obedient, ye Shall eat the good of

the land: but if ye refuse and rebel [or disobey] ye shall be devoured with the sword.—Again: I will give them an beart to know me, that I am the Lord, and they shall be my people, and I will be their God [in a new and peculiar manner:] for they shall return unto me with their WHOLE HEART .- This Shall be the covenant that I will make with the bouse of Ifrael; After those days, says the Lord, I will PUT MY LAW IN THEIR INWARD PARTS, and WRITE IT IN THEIR HEARTS, and will be their God, and they shall be my people. Jer. xxiv. 7 .- xxxi. 33 .-Then will I SPRINKLE CLEAN WATER upon you, and YE SHALL BE CLEAN, from ALL your filthiness and from ALL your idols WILL I CLEANSE YOU: A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will PUT AWAY THE MEART OF STONE out of your flesh, and I will give you an beart of flesh. And I will PUT MY SPIRIT WITHIN YOU, and cause you to WALK IN MY STA-TUTES, and YE SHALL KEEP MY JUDMGENTS AND DO THEM. Ez. XXV, 27.

And let no body suppose, that the promises of the circumcifion, the cleanfing, the clean water, and the Spirit, which are mentioned in these scriptures. and by which the hearts of believers are to be made new, and God's law is to be so written therein, that they shall keep his judgments and do them; - Let none, I fay, suppose that these glorious promises belong only to the jews; for their full accomplishment peculiarly refers to the christian dispensation. Befides, if sprinklings of the spirit were sufficient, under the jewish dispensation, to raise the plant of jewish persection in jewish believers; how much more will the revelation of the born of our falvation and the outpourings of the Spirit raise the plant of christian perfection in faithful, christian believers! And, that this revelation of Christ, in the spirit, as well as in the flesh, these effusions of the water of life, these baptisms of fire, which burn up the chaff of fin, throughly purge God's spiritual floor, save us from all our uncleannesses, and deliver us from

all our enemies;—that these blessings, I say, are peculiarly promised to christians, is demonstrable by the following cloud of new-testament declara-

tions and promifes.

Bleffed be the Lord God of Ifrael, for be bath-rais fed up an born of Salvation for us, -as be spake by the mouth of his boly prophets, -that we, being delivered out of the bands of our enemies, might ferve bim without [unbelieving] fear, [that is, with perfect love] in boliness and righteowiness before him, all the days of our life. Luke, i. 68, 75 .- Bleffed are the poor in Spirit, -who thirft after righteoufucfs, for THEY SHALL BE FILLED, Mat. v. 3, 6 .- If then knewest the gift of God, &c. thou wouldest have asked of him, and be would have given thee LIVING WATER :- And the water that I shall give bim, shall be IN HIM A WELL OF WATER Springing up to everlasting life, John iv. 10, 14, - Jejus flood and cried, saying: If any man thirst, let him come to me and drink. He that believeth on me, [when I shall have ascended up on high, to receive gifts for men] out of his belly shall flow RIVERS OF LIVING WATER [to cleanse his foul, and to keep it clean.] But this be spake OF THE SPIRIT, which they that BELIEVE on him should receive, for the Holy Ghoft was not yet given [in fuch a manner as to raife the plant of christian perfection] because Jesus was not yet glorified, and his spiritual dispensation was not yet fully opened, John vii. 37, &c. Mr. Welley, in his Plain account of christian perfection, has pubhished some excellent queries, and proposed them to those who deny perfection to be attainable in this life. They are close to the point, and therefore the two first attack the imperfectionists from the yery ground on which I want you to stand. They run thus: (1) " Has there not been a larger mea-" fure of the Holy Spirit given under the gospel, than under the jewish dispensation? If not, in " what sense was the Spirit not given before Christ was glorified? John vii. 39.—(2) Was that glory which FOLLOWED the sufferings of Christ, 1 Pet. " i. 11, an external glory, or an internal, viz, the

" glory of holiness?" Always rest the doctrine of christian perfection, on this scriptural foundation, and it will stand as firm as revelation itself.

It is allowed on all fides, that the difpensation of John the Baptist exceeded that of the other prophets, because it immediately introduced the gospel of Christ, and because John was not only appointed to preach the baptism of repentance, but also clearly to point out the very person of Christ, and to give knowledge of falvation to God's people by the remission of fins, Luke i. 77: And nevertheless, John only promised the bleffing of the spirit, which Christ bestowed when he had received gifts for men. indeed, faid John, baptize you with water unto repentance; but be that cometh after me is mightier than I,-He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire. Mat. iii, 11. Such is the importance of this promife, that it is particularly recorded not only by the three other evangelists [See Mark i. 8. Luke iii. 16, and John i. 26,] but also by our Lord himfelf, who said just before his ascension. John truly baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghoft not many days bence, Acts i. 4, 5.

So capital is this promife of the Spirit's stronger influences to raife the rare plant of christian perfection, that when our Lord speaks of this promise, he emphatically calls it The promise of the Father; because it shines among the other promises of the gospel of christ, as the moon does among the stars. Thus, Acts i. 4. Wait, fays he, for the PROMISE OF THE FATHER, which ye have heard of me. again, Luke xxiv. 49. Behold I fend the PROMISE OF MY FATHER upon you. Agreeably to this, St. Peter fays, Jefus being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father THE FROMISE OF THE HOLY GHOST, be has Shed forth this :- He has begun abundantly to fulfil that which was spoken by the prophet Joel, And it Shall come to pass IN THE LAST DAYS, Saith God, that I will POUR OUT [bestow a more abundant measure] of my spirit upon all flesh. -Therefore repent and be boptized [i. e. make an apra

open profession of your faith] in the name of the Lord Jefus, for the remission of fins : and ye shall RECEIVE THE GIFT OF THE HOLY GHOST; For THE PRO-MISE is unto you, and to your children, and to as many as the Lord our God Shall call [to enjoy the full bleffings of the christian dispensation.] Acts ii. 17, 33. 38. This promise [when it is received in its fulness] is undoubtedly the greatest of all the exceedingly great and precious PROMISES, which are given to us, that by them you might be partakers of the divine nature [that is, of pure love and unmixed holiness.] 2 Pet. i. 4. Have therefore a peculiar eye to it. and to these deep words of our Lord, I will ask the Father, and be Shall give you another Comforter, that be may abide with you for over, even the Spirit of truth [and power] whom the world knows not, &c. but ye know bim, for be remaineth with you, and SHALL BE IN YOU. - At that day ye Shall know, that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you: - For, If any man [i. e. any believer] love me, be will keep my words, and my Father will love bim, and we will come to bim, and make our abode with bim, John xiv. 15, 23: "Which," fays Mr. Welley, in his note on the place, "implies fuch a large manifestation of the divine presence and love, that the former in injustification, is as nothing in comparison of it." Agreeably to this, the fame judicious divine expresses himself thus in another of his publications: These virtues smeekness, humility, and true " refignation to God] are the only wedding garer ment; they are the lamps and veffels well fur-" nished with oil. There is nothing that will doinstead of them; they must have their full and of perfect work in you, or the foul can never be delivered from its fallen, wrathful flate. There is no possibility of salvation but in this. - And when the Lamb of God has brought forth his own meekness, &c. in our fouls, then are our 66 lamps trimmed, and our virgin-hearts made " ready for the marriage feast. This marriage of feast fignifies the entrance into the highest state of union, that can be between God and the foul Y 3

" in this life. This BIRTH-DAY OF THE SPIRIT

" will feast our souls with such peace and joy in God, as will blot out the remembrance of every

" thing that we called peace, or joy before."

To make you believe this important promise with more ardor, confider that our Lord spent some of his last moments in sealing it with his powerful intercession. After having pray'd the Father to fanctify his diciples thro' the truth firmly embraced by their faith, and powerfully applied by his spirit, he adds, neither pray I for these alone, but for them, who will believe on me thro' their word. And what is it that our Lord asks for these believers? Truly what St. Paul asked for the impersect believers at Corinth, even their perfection, 2 Cor. xiii. c. a state of foul this, which Christ describes thus: That they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they may be made ONE IN US, &c. that they may be ONE, as we are ONE: I'm them and thou in me, that they may be PERFECTED IN ONE, and that the world may know, that thou haft loved them as thou haft loved me. John xvii. 17, 23. Our Lord could not pray in vain: It is not to be fupposed, that the scriptures are filent with respect to the effect of this folemn prayer, an answer to which was to give the world an idea of the new Jerusalem coming down from heaven—a specimen of the power, which introduces believers into the flate of christian perfection, and therefore we read, that, on the day of pentecost, the kingdom of Satan was powerfully shaken, and the kingdom of God, [righteourners, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost began to come with a new power: Then were thousands wonderfully converted, and clearly justified: Then was the kingdom of heaven taken by force; and the love of Christ, and of the brethren, began to burn the chaff of felfishness and fin with a force which the world had never feen before. See Acts ii. 42, &c .- Some time after, another glorious baptism, or capital outpouring of

the Spirit carried believers farther into the kingdom of the grace, which perfects them in one. And therefore we find, that the account which St. Luke gives us of them after this second, capital manifestation of the Holy Spirit, in a great degree answers to our Lord's prayer for their perfection. He had asked that they all might be one-that they might be one as the Father and he are one, -and that they might be perfected in one, Joh. xvii. 17, &c. And now a fuller answer is given to his deep request. Take it in the words of the inspired historian: And when they had pray'd, the place was shaken where they were affembled together, and they were [once more] FILLED WITH THE HOLY GHOST, and they spake the word with [still greater] boldness: And the multitude of them that believed were of ONE HEART, and of ONE SOUL ; neither faid any of them, that ought of the things which be possessed were his own; but they bad all things common, &c. and GREAT GRACE was upon them all, Acts iv. 31, 33. Who does not fee in this account a specimen of that great grace, which our Lord had asked for believers, when he had pray'd, that his disciples, and those who would believe on him thro' their word, might be perfected in one?

It may be asked here, whether the multitude of them that believed in those happy days, where all perfect in love. I answer, that, if pure love had cast out all selfishness and finful sear from their hearts, they were undoubtedly made perfect in love; but as God does not usually remove the plague of indwelling fin till it has been discovered and lamented; and as we find in the two next chapters. an account of the guile of Ananias and his wife, and of the partiality or felfish murmuring of some believers, it feems that those chiefly, who before were ftrong in the grace of their dispensation, arose then into finless fathers; and that the first love of other believers [thro' the peculiar bleffing of Christ upon his infant-church] was fo bright and powerful for a time, that little children had, or feemed to have the firength of young men, and young men the grace of fathers.

fathers. And, in this case, the account which St. Luke gives of the primitive believers, ought to be taken with fome restriction. Thus, while many of them were perfect in love, many might have the imperfection of their love only covered over by a land-flood of peace and joy in believing. And, in this case, what is said of their being all of one beart and mind, and of their baving all things common, &c., may only mean, that the harmony of love had not yet been broken, and that none had yet betray'd any of the uncharitableness for which christians in after-ages became fo conspicuous. With respect to the GREAT grace which was upon them ALL, this does not necessarily mean that they were all equally strong in: grace, for great unity and happiness may rest upon a whole family, where the difference between a father, a young man, and a child, continues to subsist. However it is not improbable, that God, to open the dispensation of the Spirit in a manner, which might fix the attention of all ages upon its importance and glory, permitted the whole body of believers to take: an extraordinary turn together into the Canaan of perfect love, and to show the world the admirable. fruit which grows there, as the spies sent by Jebuar took a turn into the good land of promife before they were fettled in it, and brought from thence the bunch of grapes which aftonished, and spirited up the Ifraelites, who had not yet croffed Jordan.

Upon the whole, it is [I think] undeniable, from the four first chapters of the Acts, that a peculiar power of the Spirit is bestow'd upon believers under the gospel of Christ; that this power, thro' faith on our part, can operate the most sudden and surprising change in our souls; and that, when our saith shall fully embrace the promise of full sanctification, or of a complete eircumcisson of the heart in the Spirit, the Holy Ghost, who kindled so much love on the day of pentecost, that all the primitive believers loved or seemed to love each other perfectly, will not fail to help us to love one another without sinful.

finful felf-seeking; and as soon as we do so, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us. 1 John

iv. 12 .- John xiv. 23.

Should you ask, how many baptisms, or effusions of the fanctifying Spirit are necessary to cleanse a believer from all fin, and to kindle his foul into perfect love: I reply, that, the effect of a fanctifying truth depending upon the arder of the faith with which that truth is embraced, and upon the power of the Spirit with which it is applied, I should betray a want of modefly, if I brought the operations of the Holy Ghost, and the energy of faith, under a rule which is not expressly laid down in scripture. If you asked your physician, how many doses of physick you must take before all the crudities of your stomach can be carried off, and your appetite perfectly restored; he would probably answer you, that this depends upon the nature of those crudities, the strength of the medicine, and the manner in which your constitution will allow it to operate; and that, in general, you must repeat the dose, as you can bear, till the remedy has fully answered the defired end. I return a fimilar answer: If one powerful baptism of the spirit seals you unto the day of redemption, and cleanses you from all [moral] filtbiness, so much the better. If two, or more are neceffary, the Lord can repeat them : His arm is not shortened that it cannot fave: nor is his promise of the Spirit stinted: He says in general, Whosever will, let bim come and take of the water of life FREELY. -If you, being evil, know bow to give good gifts to your children; bow much more will your beavenly Father [who is goodness itself] give his bely [fanctifying | Spirit to them that afk bim! I may however renture to fay in general, that, before we can rank among perfect christians, we must receive so much of the truth and Spirit of Christ by faith, as to have the pure love of God and man fied abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost given unto us, and to be filled with the meek and lowly mind which was in Christ. And if one out-pouring of the Spirit, one bright Made Itw

bright manifestation of the sanctifying truth so empties us of self, as to fill us with the mind of Christ, and with pure love, we are undoubtedly Christians in the full sense of the word. From the ground of my soul, I therefore subscribe to the answer which a great divine makes to the following objection:

"But some who are newly justified do come up to this [christian perfection.] What then will you fay to these?"—Mr. Wesley replies with great propriety: 'If they really do, I will say, they are fanctified, faved from fin IN THAT MOMENT: and that they never need lose what God has given, or feel fin any more. But certainly this is an exempt case. It is otherwise with the generality of those that are justified. They feel in themfelves, more or less, pride, anger, felf-will, and an heart bent to backfliding. And till they have gradually mortified these, they are not fully renewed in love.—God usually gives a confiderable time for men to receive light, to grow in grace, to do and fuffer his will before they are either justified or fanctified. But he does not invariably adhere to this. Sometimes he cuts short his work. He does the work of many years in a few weeks: Perhaps in a week, a day, an hour. He justifies, or fanctifies both those who have done or fuffered nothing, and who have not had time for a gradual growth either in light or grace. may he not do what he will with his own? Is thine eye ewil, because he is good? It need not therefore be proved by forty texts of scripture. either that most men are perfected in love at last. or that there is a gradual work of God in the foul; and that, generally speaking, it is a long time, even many years, before fin is destroy'd. All this we know. But we know likewise, that God may, with man's good leave, cut short his work, in whatever degree he pleases, and do the usual work of many years in a moment. He does fo in many instances. And yet there is a gradual work, both before and after that moment. So that one may affirm, the work is gradual; another it is instantaneous, without

without any manner of contradiction. Plain acdivine explains himself more fully, thus: 4 If [christian perfection] is constantly preceded and followed by a gradual work. But is it in itself instantaneous or not? In examining this, let us go on flep by slep. An instantaneous change has been wrought in some believers: None can deny this. Since that change they enjoy perfect love. feel this and this alone. They rejoice evermore, pray without ceafing, in every thing give thanks. Now this is all that I mean by perfection. Therefore these are witnesses of the perfection which I preach.'-" But in some this change was not "instantaneous."- They did not perceive the instant when it was wrought: It is often difficult to perceive the instant when a man dies. Yet there is an instant in which life ceases. And if ever fin ceases, there must be a last moment of its sexistence, and a first moment of our deliverance from it?-" But if they have this love now, they will lose it."- They may; but they need not. And whether they do or no, they have it now : They now experience what we teach. They now " are all love. They now rejoice, pray, and praise without ceasing."-" However, fin is only fufpended in them; it is not deftroy'd."- Call it which you please. They are all love to day: And they take no thought for the morrow. To return:

(2) When you firmly affent to the truth of the precepts and promises, on which the doctrine of christian persection is sounded:—When you understand the meaning of these scriptures, sanctify them through the TRUTH, they word is TRUTH.—I will send the comforter, [the Spirit of truth and boliness] unto you:
—God has chosen you to [eternal] salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and BELIEF of the TRUTH:
—When you see, that the way to christian persection is by the word of the gospel of Christ,—by saith—and by the Spirit of God; in the next place

get tolerably clear ideas of this perfection. This is absolutely necessary. If you will hit a mark, you must know where it is. Some people aim at christian perfection; but mistaking it for angelical perfection, they shoot above the mark, miss it, and then peevishly give up their hopes. Others place the mark as much too low: Hence it is, that you hear them profess to have attained christian sperfection, when they have not fo much as attained the mental ferenity of a philosopher, or the candor of a goodnatur'd, conscientious heathen. In the preceding pages, if I am not mistaken, the mark is fixed according to the rules of scriptural moderation. is not placed fo bigb, as to make you despair of hitting it, if you do your best in an evangelical manner; nor yet fo low, as to allow you to prefume. that you can reach it, without exerting all your abilities to the uttermost, in due subordination to the efficacy of Jesu's blood, and the Spirit's fanctifying influences.

(3) Should ye ask, 'Which is the way to christian perfection? Shall we go to it by internal flillness, agreeably to this direction of Moses and

David, The Lord will fight for you, and ye shall bold your peace; Stand still and see the salvation of

God.—Be still and know that I am God.—Stand in awe and fin not: commune with your own beart upon your bed, and be still. Or shall we press after it

by an internal wreftling, according to these commands of Christ, Serive to enter in at the strait gate: The kingdom of beaven suffereth violence,

and the violent taketh it by force, &c?

According to the evangelical balance of the doctrines of free-grace and free will, I answer that the way to perfection is by the due combination of prevenient, affishing Free-grace; and of submissive, affished Free-will. Antinomian stillness therefore, which says that Free-grace must do all, is not the way. Pharisaic activity, which will do most, if not all, is not the way. Join these two partial systems; allowing Free-grace the lead and high pre-eminence which

which it so justly claims; and you have the balance of the two gospel-axioms. You do justice to the doctrines of mercy and justice—of free-grace and free-will—of divine faithfulness in keeping the covenant of grace, and of buman faithfulness in laying hold on that covenant, and keeping within it's bounds:

— In short, you have the scripture-method of waiting upon God, which Mr. Wesley describes thus:

RESTLESS, refign'd, for God I wait: For God my VEHEMENT foul flands fill.

To understand these lines, consider that faith, like the virgin Mary, is alternately a receiver and a bestower: First, it PASSIVELY receives the impregnation of divine grace, faying, Bebold the bandmaid of the Lord: Let it be done to me according to thy word: And then, it ACTIVELY brings forth its heavenly fruit with earnest labour. God worketh in you to will and to do, fays St. Paul: Here he describes the passive office of faith, which submits to, and acquiesces in, every divine dispensation and operation .- Therefore work out your own fabration with fear and trembling, and, of consequence, with hafte, diligence, ardor and faithfulnes: Here the apostle describes the active office of that mother-grace, which carefully lays out the talent fhe has already received. Would ye then wait aright for christian perfection? Impartially admit the two gospel-axioms, and faithfully reduce them to practice. In order to this, let them meet in your hearts, as the two legs of a pair of compaffes meet in the rivet, which makes them one compounded instrument. Let your faith in the doctrine of free-grace, and Christ's righteousness, fix your mind upon God, as you fix one of the legs of your compasses immoveably in the center of the circle, which you are about to draw: So shall you fland flill according to the first texts produced in the question. And then, let your faith in the doctrine of free-will, and evangelical obedience, make you

you fleadily run the circle of duty around that firm center: fo shall you imitate the other leg of the compasses, which evenly moves around the center, and traces the circumference of a perfect circle. By this activity subordinate to grace, you will take the kingdom of beaven by force. When your heart quietly rests in God by faith, as it steadily acts the part of a passive receiver, it resembles the leg of the compasses which rests in the center of the circle: and then the poet's expressions, restlessrefign'd, describe its fixedness in God, But when your heart swiftly moves towards God by faith as it acts the part of a diligent worker; when your ardent foul follows after God as a thirfly deer does after the water-brooks, it may be compared to the leg of the compasses which traces the circumference of the circle; and then, these words of the poet refliefs, and vehement, properly belong to it. go on steadily to perfection, you must therefore endeavour steadily to believe, according to the doctrine of the first gospel-axiom; and [as there is opportunity] diligently to work, according to the doctrine of the second: And the moment your faith is steadily fixed in God as in your centre, and your obedience fwiftly moves in the circle of duty from the rest and power which you find in that centre, you have attained; you are made perfect in the faith which works by love. Your humble faith faves you from pharifaifm, your obedient love from antinomianism, and both [in due fubordination to Christ] constitute you a just man made perfect according to your dispensation.

(4) Another question has also puzzled many fincere persectionists; and the solution of it may remove a considerable hindrance out of your way.

Is christian perfection, say they, to be instantaneously brought down to us? Or are we gradu-

ally to grow up to it?—Shall we be made perfect

in love by an habit of holiness fuddenly infused

into us, or by acts of feeble faith and feeble love for frequently repeated as to become strong,

habitual.

habitual, and evangelically-natural to us, accor-

a fecond nature?

Both ways are good; and instances of some believers gradually perfected, and of others [comparatively speaking inflantaneously fixed in perfect love, might probably be produced, if we were acquainted with the experiences of all those, who have died in a state of evangelical perfection. It may be with the root of fin, as it is with its fruit: Some fouls parley many years, before they can be perfuaded to give up all their outward fins, and others part with them as it were inflantaneously. You may compare the former to those belieged towns, which make a long refistance, or to those mothers who go thro' a tedious and lingering labour: And the latter resemble those fortresses, which are furprized and carried by storm; or those women. who are delivered almost as foon as labour comes upon them. Travellers inform us that vegetation is fo quick and powerful in some warm climates. that the feeds of fome vegetables yield a fallad in less than 24 hours. Should a northern philosopher fay, Impossible! and should an english gardener exclaim against such mustroom-failed, they would only expose their prejudices, as do those who decry instantaneous justification, or mock at the poffibility of the instantaneous destruction of indwelling

For where is the absurdity of this doctrine? If the light of a candle brought into a dark room can instantly expel the darkness; and if, upon opening your shutters at noon, your gloomy apartment can instantaneously be filled with meridian light; why might not the instantaneous rending of the veil of unbelief, or the sudden and sull opening of the eye of your faith, instantly fill your soul with the light of truth, and the fire of love; supposing the sun of righteousness arise upon you with powerful healing in his wings? May not the Sancisser descend upon your waiting soul, as quickly as the spirit descended

upon

upon our Lord at his baptism? Did it not descend as a dove, that is, with the foft motion of a dove, which fwiftly shoots down, and instantly lights? A good man faid once, with truth, "A mote is little when it is compared to the fun, but I am far less " before God." Alluding to this comparison I ask, If the sun could instantly kindle a mote; nay if a burning glass can in a moment calcine a bone, and turn a stone to lime; and if the dim slame of a candle can in the twinkling of an eye destroy the flying infect which comes within its sphere, how unscriptural and irrational is it to suppose, that, when God fully baptizes a foul with his fanctifying Spirit and with the celestial fire of his love, he cannot in an instant destroy the man of fin, burn up the chaff of corruption, melt the heart of stone into an heart of flesh, and kindle the believing foul into pure

feraphic love!

An appeal to parallel cases may throw some light upon the question which I answer. If you were fick, and asked of God the perfect recovery of your health, how would you look for it? Would you expect to have your strength restored you at once. without any external means, as the lepers who were INSTANTLY cleanfed; and as the paralytic, who, at our Lord's word, took up the bed on which he lay, and carried it away upon his shoulders? Or by using some external means of a slower operation. as the ten lepers did, who were more GRADUALLY cleansed, as they went to shew themselves to the priests: Or as King Hezekiah, whose gradual, but equally fure recovery, was owing to God's bleffing upon the poultice of figs prescribed by Isaiah? Again: If you were blind, and befought the Lord to give you perfect human fight; how should you wait for it? As Bartimeus, whose eyes were opened in an instant? Or as the man who received his fight by degrees. At first he saw nothing: By and by he confusedly discovered the objects before him, but at last he faw all things clearly? Would ye not earnestly wait for an answer to your prayers now; leaving to divine COQU

divine wisdom the particular manner of your recovery? And why should ye not go and do likewise, with respect to the dreadful disorder which we call

indwelling fin?

If our hearts are purified by faith, as the feripture expressly testifies ;-if the faith, which peculiarly purifies the heart of christians, is a faith in the premise of the Father, which promise was made by the Son, and directly points at a peculiar efution of the Holy Ghost, the purifier of spirits ;-if we may believe in a moment; -and if God may, in a moment, feal our fanctifying faith by fending us a fulness of his fanctifying spirit; -if this, I say, is the case; does it not follow, that to deny the poffibility of the inflantaneous destruction of fin; is to deny [contrary to scripture and matter of fact] that we can make an inflantaneous act of faith in the fanctifying promise of the Father, and in the all-cleanfing blood of the Son, and that God can feal that act by the instantaneous operation of his Spirit? which St, Paul calls the circumcifion of the beart in for by the Spirit, according to the Lord's ancient promise, I will circumcife thy beart, to love the Lord thy God WITH ALL THY HEART? Where is the absurdity of believing that the God of all grace can now give an answer to the poet's rational and evangelical request ?

Open my faith's interior eye:
Display thy glory from above;
And finful self shall fink and die,
Lost in astonishment and love.

If a momentary display of Christ's bodily glory, could in an instant turn Saul, the blassheming, bloody persecutor, into Paul, the praying, gentle apostle;—if a sudden sight of Christ's hands, could in a moment root up from Thomas's heart, that detestable resolution, I will not believe, and produce that deep confession of faith, My Lord and my God! what cannot the display of Christ's spiritual glory, Z 3.

operate in a believing foul, to which he manifests himself according to that power, whereby he is able to subdue all things to himself?-Again: If Christ's body could, in an instant, become so glorious on the mount, that his very garments partook of the fudden irradiation, became not only free from every fpot, but also white as the light,-shining exceeding white as snow; so as no fuller on earth can white them; -and if our bodies shall be changed; if this corruptible shall put ou incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality IN A MOMENT, in the TWINKLING OF AN EYE, at the last trump; why may not our believing fouls, when they fully fubmit to God's terms, be fully changed—fully turned from the power of Satan unto God? When the Holy Ghost fays, Now is the day of falvation, does he exclude falvation from heart-iniquity?—If Christ now deserves fully the name of Jesus, because be [fully] faves his [believing] people from their fins; and if now the gospel-trumpet sounds; and sinners arise from the dead, why should we not upon the performance of the condition be changed in a moment from indwelling fin to indwelling holiness? Why should we not pass in the twinkling of an eye, or in a short time, from indwelling death to indwelling life?

This is not all: If you deny the possibility of a quick destruction of indwelling sin, you send to hell, or to some unscriptural purgatory, not only the dying thief, but also all those martyrs who suddenly embraced the christian faith, and were instantly put to death by bloody persecutors, for confessing the faith which they had just embraced. And if you allow, that God may cut his work short in righteousness in such a case, why not in other cases?—Why not especially when a believer confesses his indwelling sin, ardently prays that Christ would, and sincerely believes that Christ can

NOW cleanse bim from all unrighteousness?

No body is so apt to laugh at the inflantaneous destruction of sin as the Calvinists, and yet [such

is the inconfiftency which characterizes fome men! their doctrine of purgatory is built upon it. For, if you credit them, all dying believers have a nature which is fill morally corrupted, and an heart which is yet desperately wicked. These believers, still full of indwelling fin, instantaneously breathe out their last, and [without any peculiar act of faith, without any peculiar out-pouring of the far hifying fpirit] corruption is inftantaneously gone. indwelling man of fin has passed through the Geneva purgatory, he is entirely confumed, and, behold ! the fouls which would not hear of the instantaneous act of fanctifying faith, which receives the indwelling Spirit of holiness—the souls, which pleaded hard for the continuance of indwelling hn, are now completely finless; and in the twinkling of an eye they appear in the third heaven among the spirits of just christians made perfect in love! Such is the doctrine of our opponents: and yet, they think it incredible that God should do for us while we pray in faith, what they suppose death will do for them, when they lie in his cold arms, perhaps delirious or fenseless!

On the other hand, to deny that imperfect believers may, and do gradually grow in grace, and of course that the remains of their fins may and, do gradually decay, is as absurd as to deny that God waters the earth by daily dews, as well as by thunder-showers;—it is as ridiculous, as to affert that nobody is carried off by lingering disorders, but that all men die suddenly, or a sew hours after they are taken ill.

I use these comparisons about death to throw some light upon the question which I solve, and not to infinuate that the decay and destruction of sin run parallel to the decay and dissolution of the body, and that, of course, sin must end with our bodily life. Were I to admit this unscriptural tenet, I should build again what I have all along endeavoured to destroy, and [as I love consistency] I should promise eternal salvation to all unbelievers; for unbelievers, I presume, will die, i. e. will

Nor do I see why death should not be able to destroy the van and the main body of sin's forces, if it can so readily cut the rear [the remains of sin].

in pieces.

From the preceding observations it appears, that believers generally go to christian perfection, as the disciples went to the other side of the sea of Gali-They toiled some sime very hard, and with little fucceis. But after they had rowed about twenty-five or thirty furlongs, they faw fefus walking on the fea. He faid to them, It is I, be not afraid : Then they willingly received bim into the Ship, and IMMEDI-ATELY the ship was at the land whither they went. Just so we toil till our faith discovers Christ in the promise, and welcomes him into our hearts; and fuch is the effect of his presence, that immediately we arrive at the land of pertection. Or [to ule another illustration] God fays to believers, Go to the Canaan of perfect love. Arise: why do ye tarry? Wash away the remains of fin, calling, i. e. believing on the name of the Lord. And if they fubmit to the obedience of faith, he deals with them as he did with the evangelist Philip, to whom he had faid, Arife, and go towards the South. For when they arise and run, as Philip did, the Spirit of the Lord takes them, as he did the evangelist; and they are found in the new Jerusalem, as Philip was found at Azotus. They dwell in God for in perfect love] and God [or perfect love] dwells in them.

Hence it follows, that the most evangelical method of following after the perfection to which we are immediately called, is that of seeking it now, by endeavouring fully to lay hold on the promise of that perfection thro' faith, just as if our repeated acts of obedience could never help us forward. But in the mean time we should do the work of faith, and repeat our internal and external acts of obedience with as much earnestness, and faithfulness, according to our present power, as if we were sure to enter into rest merely by a diligent use of our

talents, and a faithful exertion of the powers which divine grace has bestowed upon us. If we do not attend to the first of these directions, we shall seek to be sanctified by works like the pharisees; and if we disregard the second we shall slide into solisidian sloth with the antinomians.

This double direction is founded upon the connexion of the two gospel-axioms. If the second axiom [which implies the doctrine of free-will] were false, I would only say: "Be still, or rather" Do nothing: Free-grace alone will do all in you "and for you." But as this axiom is as true as the first, I must add, "Strive in bumble subordination to free-grace: for Christ saith, To bim that bath initiating grace to purpose, more grace shall be given, and he shall have abundance: His saithful and equitable Benefactor will give him the reward of perfect-

ing grace.

(5) Beware therefore of unfcriptural refinements. Set out for the Canaan of perfect love with a firm resolution to labour for the rest which remains on earth for the people of God. Some good, mistaken men, wife above what is written, and fond of firiking out paths, which were unknown to the apostles,new paths marked out by voluntary humility, and leading to antinomianism; -Some people of that stamp, I say, have made it their business, from the days of heated Augustin, to decry making refolutions. They represent this practice as a branch of what they are pleased to call legality. They infinuate that it is utterly inconfistent with the knowledge of our inconstancy and weakness: In a word, they frighten us from the first step to christian perfection; -from an humble, evangelical determination to run, till we reach the prize, or, if you please, to go down till we come to the lowest place. It may not be amiss to point out the ground of their mistake. Once they broke the balance of the gofpel-axioms by leaning too much towards free-will, and by not laying their first and principal stress upon free-grace. God, to bring them to the evangelical

mean, refused his bleffing to their unevangelical willing and running: Hence it is, that their self-righteous resolutions started aside like a broken bow. When they sound out their mistake, instead of coming back to the line of moderation, they sted to the other extreme. Casting all their weights into the scale of Free-grace, they absurdly form'd a resolution never to form a resolution: and, determining not to throw one determination into the scale of free-will, they began to draw all the believers they met with, into the ditch of a slothful quietism and

Laodicean stillness.

You will never steadily go on to perfection, un-less you get over this mistake. Let the imperfectionists laugh at you for making humble resolutions; but go on fledfastly purposing to lead a new life, as fays our church; and in order to this, fledfaftly purpoje to get a new beart in the full fense of the word: For fo long as your heart will continue partly unrenew'd, your life will be partly unboly. And therefore, St. James justly observes, that, if any man of-fend not in word, be is a perfect man, he loves God with all his heart, his heart is fully renewed; it being impossible that an heart still-tainted in part with vanity and guile, should always dictate the words of fincerity and love. Your good resolutions need not fail: Nor will they fail, if, under a due sense of the fickleness and helplessness of your unaffished free-will, you properly depend upon God's faithfulness and affitance. However should they fail, as they probably will do more than once, be not discouraged, but repent, search out the cause, and in the strength of Free-grace, let your affisted freewill, renew your evangelical purpose, till the Lord feals it with his mighty fiat, and fays, Let it be done to thee according to thy resolving faith. It is much better to be laughed at as "poor creatures who know nothing of themselves," than to be deluded as foolish virgins, who fondly imagine that their vessels are full of imputed oil. Take therefore the fword of the Spirit, and boldly cut this dangerous fnare in pieces. Conscious of your impotence, and

and yet laying out your talent of free-will, fay with the prodigal fon, I will arise and go to my Father :-Say with David, I will love thee, O Lord my God: -I will behold thy face in righteonfues: -I am purposed that my mouth shall not transgress; - I will keep it as it were with a bridle: - I have faid, that I would keep thy word :- The proud [and they who are humble in an unscriptural way | bave bad me exceedingly in derifion, but I will keep thy precepts with my WHOLE HEART .- I bave favorn, and I will perform it, that I will keep thy righteous judgments .- Say with St. Paul, I am determined not to know any thing fave Jefus, and bim crucified; and with Jacob, I will not let thee go, unless thou bless me: And, to fum up all good retolutions in one, if you are a member of the church of England, fay, " I have engaged to renounce all the vanities of this wicked world, all the finful lusts of the flesh, and all the works of the devil; to believe all the articles of the christian faith; and to keep God's commandments all the days of my life:" That is, I have most folemnly resolved to be a perfect christian. And this resolution I have publicly fealed by receiving the two facraments upon it :- Baptism, after my parents and sponsors had laid me under this bleffed vow; and the Lord's futper, after I had personally ratified, in the bishop's presence, what they had done. Nor do I only think, that I am bound to keep this vow; but "by God's grace, so I WILL; and I beartily thank our beawenly Father, that be bas called me to this flate of falwation [and christian perfection;] and I pray unto bim, to give me bis grace, that I may [not only attain it, but also] continue in the same unto my life's end." Church Catech.

"Much diligence [fays Kempis] is necessary
to him that will profit much. If he who firmly
purposeth, often faileth, what shall he do, who
feldom or feebly purposeth any thing?" But [I
fay it again and again] do not lean upon your free
will, and good purposes, so as to encreach upon the
glorious preeminence of Free-grace. Let the first

gospel-axiom stand invariably in its bonourable place. Lay your principal stress upon divine mercy, and say with the good man whom I have just quoted, Help me O Lord God, in thy holy service, and grant that I may now this day begin perfectly."

In following this method, ye will do the two gospel-axioms justice: Ye will so depend upon God's Free-grace, as not to fall into pharisaic running; and ye will so exert your own free-will, as not to slide into antinomian sloth. Your course lies exactly between these rocks. To pass these perilous straits your resolving heart must acquire an heavenly polarity. Through the spiritually-magnetic touch of Christ the corner stone, your soul must learn to point towards faith and works, [or if you please, towards a due submission to free-grace, and a due exertion of free-will] as the opposite ends of the needle of a compass points towards the north

and the fouth.

(6) From this direction flows the following advice. Resolve to be perfect in your selves but not of yourselves. The antinomians boast that they are perfect only in their heavenly representative. Christ was filled with perfect humility and love: They are perfect in his perfon: They need not a perfection of humble love in themselves. To avoid their error, be perfect in yourselves, and not in another: Let your perfection of humility and love be inherent; let it dwell in you. Let it fill your orum heart and influence your orum life: So shall you avoid the delufion of the virgins, who give you to understand, that the oil of their perfection is all contained in the facred veffel which formerly hung on the cross, and therefore their falvation is finished, they have oil enough in that rich veffel; manna enough and to spare in that golden pot. Christ's heart was perfect, and therefore theirs may fafely remain imperfect, yea, full of indwelling fin, till death, the messenger of the bridegroom come to cleanse them, and fill them with perfect love at the midnight cry! Delufive hope! Can any thing be more abfurd than for a fapless, dry branch

branch to fancy that it has fap and moisture enough in the vine which it cumbers? Or for an impenitent adulterer to boaft, that in the Lord be bas chaftity and rightcoufness? Where did Christ ever fay, bour falt IN ANOTHER? Does he not fay, take beed the ye be not deceived ?- Have falt IN YOURSELVES, Mark ix. 50? Does he not impute the destruction of stony ground-hearers to their not bening root in themselves, Mat. xiii. 21? If it was the patient man's comfort, that the root of the matter was foun IN HIM, is it not deplorable to hear modern believers fay without any explanatory claufe, that they have nothing but fin in themselves? But is it enough to have THE ROOT in ourfelves? Must we not also have the fruit-yea, be filled with the fruits of righteousness? Phil. i. 11. Is it not St. Peter's doctrine, where he fays, if theje things BE IN YOU. and abound, ye Shall neither be barren, nor unfruitfi in the knowledge of Christ? 2 Pet. i. 8. And is it not that of David, where he prays, create IN ME a clean heart, Sc? Away then with all antinomian refinements: And if, with St. Paul, you will have falvation and rejoicing in yourselves, and not in another; make fure of holiness and perfection in yourselves, and not in another.

But while you endeavour to avoid the snare of the antinomians, do not run into that of the pharifees, who will have their perfection of themselves; and therefore, by their own unevengelical efforts felf-concerted willings, and felf-prescribed runnings, endeavour to raife sparks of their own kindling, and to warm themselves by their own painted fires, and fruitless agitations. Feel your impotence. Own that no man bas quicken'd [and perfected] bis own foul. Be contented to invite, receive, and welcome the light of life: But never attempt to form or to engross it. It is your duty to wait for the morninglight, and to rejoice when it vifits you; but if you grew fo felf-conceited as to fay, ' I will create a fun; Let there be light; or if, when the light visits your eyes, you faid, 'I will bear a stock of light.

light, I will fo fill my eyes with light to-day, that to-morrow I shall almost be able to do my work without the fun, or at least without a confant dependance upon its beams; would ye not betray a species of self-deifying idolatry, and satanical pride? If our Lord himself [as Son of man] would not have one grain of human goodness of bimfelf, if he faid, Wby callest thou me good? There is none good [felf-good, or good of himfelf] but God; who can wonder enough at those proud christians, who claim fome felf-originated goodness; boasting of what they have received, as if they had not received it; or using what they have received without an humble fense of their constant dependance upon their heavenly Benefactor? To avoid this horrid delusion of the pharisees, learn to see, to feel, and to acknowledge, that of the Father, thro' the Son, and by the Holy Ghost, are all your Urim and Thummim, your lights and perfections: And while the Lord fays, FROM ME is thy fruit found, Hof. xiv, 8. bow at his footstool, and gratefully reply, OF THY FULNESS bave all we received, and grace for grace: John i, 16. For thou art the Father of lights, from subom cometh every good and perfect gift, Jam. i, 17 .- Of thee, and thro' thee, and to thee are all things: To thee [therefore] be the glory for ever. Amen. Rom. xi, 36.

(7) You will have this humble and thankful disposition, if you let your repentance cast deeper roots. For if christian perfection implies a forsaking all inward, as well as ourward sin; and if true repentance is a grace "whereby we fersake sin, it follows, that, to attain christian perfection, we must so follow our Lord's evangelical precept, Repent, for the kingdom of beaven is at hand, as to leave no sin—no bosom-sin—no heart-sin—no indwelling sin unrepented of, and, of consequence, unforsaken. He, whose heart is still full of indwelling sin, has no more truly repented of indwelling sin, than the man, whose mouth is still defiled with filthy talking and jesting, has truly repented of his ribaldry.

The deeper our forrow for, and detestation of indwelling fin is, the more penitently do we confess the plague of our heart; and when we properly confess it, we inherit the blessing promised in these words, If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our fins, and to cleanse us from ALL

unrighteoufnets.

To promote this deep repentance, confider how many spiritual evils still haunt your breast. Look into the inward chamber of imagery, where assuming felf-love, furrounded by a multitude of vain thoughts, foolish defires, and wild imaginations, keeps her court. Grieve that your heart, which should be all flesh, is yet partly stone; that your foul, which should be only a temple for the Holy Ghost, is yet so frequently turned into a den of thieves, an hole for the cockatrice, a nest for a brood of spiritual vipers-for the remains of envyjealoufy, fretfulness, anger, pride, impatience, pee-vishness, formality, sloth, prejudice, bigotry, carnal confidence, evil shame, self-righteousness, tormenting, fears, uncharitable fuspicions, idolatrous love, and I know not how many of the evils, which form the retinue of hypocrify and unbelief. Thro grace detect these evils by a close attention to what passes in your own heart at all times, but especially in an hour of temptation. By frequent and deep confession, drag out all these abominations. These fins, which would not have Christ to reign alone over you, bring before him: Place them in the light of his countenance; and [if you do it in faith] that light, and the warmth of his love, will kill them, as the light and heat of the fun kill the worms, which the plow turns up to the open air in a dry fummer's day.

Nor plead that you can do nothing: For, by the help of Christ, who is always ready to affist the helples, ye can solemnly say upon your knees, what ye have probably said in an airy manner to your professing friends. If ye ever acknowledged to them, that your heart is deceitful, prone to leave

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undone

undone what ye ought to do, and ready to do what ye ought to leave undone; ye can undoubtedly make the same confession to God. Complain to him who can help you, as ye have done to those who cannot. Lament, as you are able, the darkness of your mind, the stiffness of your will, the duliness or exorbitancy of your affections, and importunately intreat the God of all grace to renew a right spirit within you. If ye sorrow after this godly sort, what carefulness will be wrought in you! what indignation! what fear! what vehement desire! what zeal! yea, what revenge! Ye will then sing in saith, what the impersectionists sing in unbelief:

O how I hate those lusts of mine, That crucified my God; Those sins that pierc'd and nail'd his sless Fast to the fatal wood.

Yes, my Redeemer, they shall DIE,
My bears bath so decreed;
Nor will I spare those guilty things,
That made my Saviour bleed.

Whilst with a melting, broken heart, My murder'd Lord I view, I'll raise revenge against my fins, And SLAY the murderers too.

(8) Closely connected with this deep repentance is the practice of a judicious, universal self-denial. If thou wilt be perfect, says our Lord, deny thyself: Take up thy cross daily; and follow me. He that loveth father, or mother, [much more he that loveth praise, pleasure or money] more than me, is not worthy of me: Nay, Whosever will save his life, shall lose it; and whosever will lose it for my sake, shall find it. Many desire to live and reign with Christ, but sew chuse to suffer and die with him. However, as the way of the cross leads to heaven, it undoubtedly leads to christian persection. To avoid

avoid the cross therefore; or to decline drinking the cup of vinegar and gall, which God permits your friends or foes to mix for you, is to throw away the aloes, which divine wisdom puts to the breasts of the mother of harlots, to wean you from her and her witchcrafts: It is to refuse a medicine which is kindly prepared to restore your health and appetite: In a word, it is to renounce the physician, who beals ALL our infirmities when we take his bitter draughts, fubmit to have our imposthumes open'd by his sharp lancet, and yield to have our proud fleth wasted away by his painful caustics. Our Lord was made a perfect Saviour thre' fufferings, and we may be made perfect christians in the same manner. We may be called to fuffer, till all that which we have brought out of spiritual Egypt is confumed in an howling wilderness, in a difmal Gethsemane, or on a shameful Calvary. Should this lot be referved for us, let us not imitate our Lord's imperfect disciples, who for fook bim and fled; but let us stand the fiery trial, till all our fetters are melted, and all our drofs is purged away. Fire is of a purgative nature: it separates the drossfrom the gold; and the fiercer it is, the more quick and powerful is its operation. He that is left in Zion, and be that remaineth in Jerufalem, Stall becalled boly; &c. when the Lord thall have wasted away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall bave purged the blood of Jerusalem by the spirit of judgment and by the fpirit of burning. Ita. iv, 4 .- I will bring the third part thro' the five, faith the Lord, and will refine them as filver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will bear them: I will fay; it is my people; and they shall fay; The Lord is my God. Zech. xiii. 9. Therefore, if the Lord should suffer the best men in his camp, or the firongest men in Satar's army, to cast you into a furnace of fiery temptations, come not out of it till you are called. Let patience bave its perfect work: meekly keep your trying station, till your heart is difengaged from all that is earthly, and till the fenfa-A a 3

of God's preserving power kindles in you such a faith in his omnipotent love, as sew experimentally know, but they who have seen themselves like the mysterious bush in Horeb, burning and yet unconfumed; or they who can say with St. Paul, Ware killed all the day long; and behold we live!

" Temptations [Jays Kempis] are often very pro-" fitable to men, though they be troublesome and " grievous: for in them a man is humbled, puri-" fied, and instructed. All the faints have passed " thro', and profited by many tribulations: and " they that could not bear temptations, became re-"probates, and fell away "-" My Son [adds the author of Ecclefiasticus, chap. ii. 1.] " if thou come to serve the Lord" [in the perfest heavy of holiness " prepare thy foul for temptation. Set "thy heart aright; constantly endure; and make " not hafte in the time of trouble. Whatever is " brought upon thee take chearfully; and be pa-"tient when thou art changed to a low estate: " for gold is tried and purified in the fire, and ac-" ceptable men in the furnace of advertity."-And therefore, fays St. James, Bleffed is the man that endureth temptation; for, when he is tried [if he flands the fiery trial] be shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord has promised to them that love him (with the love which endureth (temptation and) all things, i. e. with perfect love.] Jam. i. 12. Patiently endure then, when God for a feafon [if need be] will fuffer you to be in beaviness thro manifold temptations. By this means, the trial of your faith, being much more precious than that of gold which perifbeth, tho' it be tried in the fire, will be found unto praise, and bonour, and glory, at the appearing of Jefus Christ. 1 Pet. 1. 7.

(9) Deep repentance is good, gospel self-denial is excellent, and a degree of patient resignation in trials is of unspeakable use to attain the persection of love: But as faith immediately works by love, it is of far more immediate use to purify the soul. Hence it is, that Christ, the prophets, and the apostles.

apostles, so strongly infist upon faith; affuring us that if we will not BELIEVE, we shall not be ESTAB-LISHED; that if the will BELIEVE the fall SEB THE GLORY OF GOD, -we Shall be SAVED, -and RIVERS of living water shall flow from our inmost fouls; -that our bearts are purified BY FAITH :- and that we are SAVED by grace THRO' FAITH :- They tell us, that Chrift gave bimfelf for the church, that be might SANCTIFY and CLEANSE it-BY THE WORD, that be might prefent it to bimfelf a glorious church, wor HAVING SPOT OR WRINKLE, OR ANY SUCH THING; but that it should be HOLY and WITHOUT BLEMISH. Now, if believers are to be cleanfed and made without blemish BY THE WORD [which tellifies of the all-atoning blood, and the love of the Spirit] it is. evident that they are to be fanctified by FAITH; for faith, or believing, has as necessary a referenceto THE WORD as eating has to food .- For the fame reason the aposte observes, that they who BELIEVE enter into rest; -that a promise being given us to enter in, we should take care not to fall short of it THRO UNBELIEF; -that we ought to take warning by the. Ifraelites, who could not enter into the land of promile THRO' UNBELIEF;—that we are filled with ALL joy and peace in BELIEVING ; - and that Christ is able to SAVE TO THE UTTERMOST them audo COME. unto God thro' bim: Now coming, in the scripture language is another expression for BELIEVING: He that COMETH to God [fays the apostle] my BE-LIEVE. Hence it appears, that faith is peculiarly necessary to those who will be faved to the uttermost -especially a firm faith in the capital promise of the gospel of Christ-the promise of the Spirit of bolinefs, from the Father, thro' the Son. For, How shall they call on him, in whom they have not BELIEV-ED? Or, How can they earnestly plead the truth, and steadily wait for the performance, of a promife, in which they have no FAITH?-This doctrine of faith is supported by Peter's words: God, who knoweth the hearts [of penitent believers] bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost-and PURIFY-ING THEIR HEARTS BY FAITH. Acts XV. 8, 9.

For the same spirit of FAITH, which initially purifies our hearts when we cordially believe the pardoning love of God, completely cleanses them when

we fully believe his fanctifying love.

(10) This direction about faith being of the utmost importance, I shall confirm and explain it by an extract from Mr. Welley's 43d. Sermon, which points out " The scripture-away of falvation." . Tho? it be allowed [fays this judicious divine] That both this repentance and its fruits are necessary to full falvation, yet they are not necessary either ' in the same sense with faith, or in the same degree; onot in the fame degree; for these fruits are only · necessary conditionally, it there be time and opportunity for them, otherwise a man may be fanctified without them. But he cannot be fanctified without faith. Likewise let a man have ever so much of this repentance, or ever fo many good works, yet all this docs not at all avail; he is not fanctified till he believes. But the moment he believes, with or without those fruits, yea, with " more or less of this repentance, he is sanctified. Not in the same sewje; for this repentance and these fruits are only remotely necessary, necessary in order to the continuance of his faith, as well as the increase of it : whereas faith is immediately and directly necessary to fanctification. It remains that faith is the only condition, which is immediately and proximately necessary to fanchification." But what is that faith whereby we are fanctified, faved from fin, and perfected in love? It is a divine evidence and conviction, (1) That God hath promised it in the holy scripture. Till we are throughly fatisfied of this, there is no moving one step further. And one would imagine, there ' needed not one word more, to fatisfy a reasonable man of this, than the ancient promise, Then will I circumcife thy beart, and the beart of thy feed, to love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your foul. How clearly does this express the heing perfected in love? How strongly imply the ATTIAL TO STREET WICHE being

being faved from all fin? For as long as love takes up the whole heart, what room is there for fin therein ?- (2) It is a divine evidence and conviction, that what God has promised he is able to perform. Admitting therefore that with men. it is impossible, to bring a clean thing out of an unclean, to purify the heart from all fin, and to fill it with all holiness; yet this creates no difficulty in the case, seeing with God all things are possible.—(3) It is an evidence and conviction, that he is able and willing to do it now. And why ' not? Is not a moment to him, the same as a thousand years? He cannot want more time to accomplish whatever is his will. We may therefore boldly fay at any point of time, New is the day of falvation. Behold! All things are now ready! Come to the marriage!-(4) To this confidence, That God is both able and willing to fanctify us now, there needs to be added one thing more, a divine evidence and conviction 'That be doth it. In that hour it is done. God fays to the inmost foul, According to thy faith, be ' it unto thee! Then the foul is pure from every fpot of fin ; it is clean from all unrighteoujuefs.

Those who have low ideas of faith, will probably be furprized to fee how much Mr. Welley afcribes to that christian grace, and to inquire why he fo nearly connects our believing that God cleanfer us from all fin, with God's actual cleaning of us from all fin. But their wonder will cease, if they confider the definition which this Divine gives of faith in the fame fermon. 'Faith, in general [fays he] is defined by the Apostle, An evidence, a divine evidence and conviction [the word used by the apostle 'means both of things not feen: not visible, nor perceivable either by fight, or by any other of the external fenses. It implies both a fupernatural evidence of God and of the things of God, a kind of spiritual light exhibited to the foul, and a supernatural sight or preception thereof: accordingly the scripture speaks of God's

giving fometimes light, fometimes a power of differning it. So St. Paul. God subo commanded bight to Shine out of darkness, bath Shined in our bearts, to give us the light of the knowledge of the eliewhere the same apostle speaks of the eyes of our understanding being opened. By this TWO-FOLD OPERATION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, having the 'eyes of our fouls both opened and enlightened, we see the things which the natural eye bath not ' feen, neither the ear heard. We have a prospect of the invisible things of God : we see the fi-' ritual world, which is all round abour us, and yet ono more differend by our natural faculties, than-" if it had no being : and we fee the cternal world, ' piercing thro' the veil which hangs between time and eternity. Clouds and darkness then rest upon it no more, but we already fee the glory: which shall be revealed."

From this striking definition of faith it is evident. that the doctrine of this Address exactly coincides. with Mr. Welley's fermon; with this verbal difference only, that what he calls FAITH implying 2 two-fold CPERATION OF THE SPIRIT productive of spiritual light, and supernatural fight ! I have called FAITH apprehending a fanctifying BAPTISM. [or OUT-POURING] OF THE SPIRIT. His mode of expression favours more of the rational divine, who logically divides the truth, in order to render its feveral parts conspicuous: and I keep closer to the words of the scriptures, which, I hope, will frighten no candid protestant. I make this remark. for the fake of those who fancy, that, when a doctrine is clothed with expressions which are not quite familiar to them, it is a new doctrine; altho these expressions should be as scriptural as those of a baptism, or out-pouring of the Spirit, which are used by some of the prophets, by John the Baptist, by the four evangelists, and by Christ himself.

I have already pointed out the close connexion there is, between an act of faith which fully appre-

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hends the fanctifying promise of the Father, and the power of the Spirit of Christ, which makes an end of moral corruption by forcing the lingering man of sin instantaneously to breathe out his last. Mr. Wesley in the above-quoted fermon touches upon this delicate subject in so clear and concise a manner, that while his discourse is before me, for the sake of those who have it not at hand, I shall transcribe the whole passage, and by this means put the seal of that eminent divine to what I have advanced, in the preceding pages, about fanctifying saith, and the quick destruction of sin.

Does God work this great work in the foul gradually or inflantaneously? Perhaps it may be gradually wrought in fome: I mean in this fense: They do not advert to the particular moment, wherein fin ceases to be. But it is infinitely defirable, were it the will of God, that it should be done instantaneously; that the Lord should de-Afroy fin by the breath of his mouth, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. And fo he generally does, a plain fact, of which there is evidence enough to fatisfy any unprejudiced person. Thou therefore look for it every moment. Look for it in the way above described; in all those good works, whereunto thou art created anew in Christ Iesus. There is then no danger: you can be ono worse, if you are no better for that expectation. For were you to be disappointed of your hope, still you lose nothing. But you shall not be disappointed of your hope: it will come, and will not tarry. Look for it then every day, every hour, every moment. Why not this hour, this moment? Certainly you may look for it now, if you believe it is by faith. And by this token you may furely know whither you feek it by faith or by works. If by works, you want fomething to be done first: before you are fanctified. You think, " I must first be or do thus " or thus." Then you are feeking it by works early on third and met below.

expect it as you are: and if as you are, then expect it now. It is of importance to observe that there is an inseparable connexion between these three points, expect it by faith, expect it as you are, and expect it now! To deny one of them is to deny them all: to allow one is to allow them all. Do you believe, we are sanctified by faith? Be true then to your principle; and look for this bleffing just as you are, neither better, nor worse; as a poor sinner, that has still nothing to pay, nothing to plead, but Christ died. And if you look for it as you are, then expect it now. Stay for nothing: Why should you? Christ is ready: and he is all you want, He is waiting for you; he is at the door! Let your inmost soul cry out,

* Come in, come in, thou heavenly guest!

' Nor hence again remove :

But sup with me, and let the feast Be everlasting love.

(11) Social prayer is closely connected with faith, in the capital promise of the sanctifying Spirit; and therefore I earnestly recommend that mean of grace [where it can be had] as being eminently conducive to the attaining of christian perfection. When many believing hearts are listed up, and wrestle with God in prayer together, you may compare them to many diligent hands, which work a darge pump. At such times, particularly, the sountains of the great deep are broken up, the windows of heaven are opened, and rivers of living water flow from the heart of obedient believers.

In Christ when brethren join,
And follow after peace,
The fellowship divine
He promises to bless,
His chiefest graces to bestow
Where two or three are met below.

Where

Where unity takes place,
The joys of heaven we prove;
This is the gospel grace,
The unction from above,
The Spirit on all believers shed,
Descending swift from Christ their head.

Accordingly we read, that, when God power-fully opened the kingdom of the Holy Ghost on the day of pentecost, the disciples were all WITH ONE ACCORD in one place. And when he confirmed that kingdom, they were lifting up their voice to God WITH ONE ACCORD. See Acts ii. 1, and iv. 24. Thus also the believers at Samaria were filled with the Holy Ghost, the Sanctifier, while Peter and John pray'd with them, and laid hands upon them.

(12) But perhaps thou art alone. As a folitary bird which fitteth on the house-top, thou lookest for a companion who may go with thee thro' the deepest travel of the regeneration. But alas! thou lookest in vain : All the professors about thee feem fatisfied with their former experiences, and with felf-imputed or felf-conceited perfection. thou givest them a hint of thy want of power from on high, and of thy hunger and thirst after a fulness of righteoufness, they do not sympathize with thee. And indeed how can they? They are full already, they reign without thee, they have need of nothing, They do not fenfibly want that God would grant them, according to the riches of his glory, to be firengthened with might in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in their bearts by faith, that they, being rooted and grounded in love, may comprehend with all faints [perfected in love] what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and beight, and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that they might be FILLED WITH ALL THE FULNESS of God, Eph. iii. 16, &c. They look upon thee as a whimfical perfon, full of fingular notions, and they rather damp, Bb

than enliven thy hopes. Thy circumstances are fad; but do not give place to despair, no not for a moment. In the name of Christ, who could not get even Peter, James, and John, to watch with him one hour; and who was obliged to go through his agony alone; -in his name, I fay, cast not away thy confidence which has great recompence of reward. Under all thy discouragements, remember that, after all, divine grace is not confined to numbers, any more than to a few. When all outward helps fail thee, make the more of Christ, on whom sufficient belp is laid for thee, -Christ, who says, I will go with thee thro' fire and water: The former shall not burn thee, nor the latter drown thee. Jacob was alone when he wrestled with the angel, yet he prevailed: And if the servant is not above his master, wonder not, that it should be faid of thee, as of thy Lord, when he went thro' his greatest temptations, Of the people there was none with him.

Should thy conflicts be with confused noise, with burning, and fewel of fire; should thy Jerusalem be rebuilt in troublous times; should the Lord Stake not the earth only, but also beaven; Should deep call unto deep at the noise of his water-spouts; should all his waves and billows go over thee; should thy patience be tried to the uttermost; remember how in years past thou hast tried the patience of God, nor be discouraged: An extremity, and a storm, are often God's opportunity. A blast of temptation, and a shaking of all thy foundations, may introduce the fullness of God to thy foul, and answer the end of the rushing wind, and of the shaking, which formerly accompanied the first great manifestations of the Spirit. The jews still expect the coming of the Messiah in the flesh; and they particularly expect it in a storm. When lightnings flash, when thunders roar, when a strong wind shakes their houses, and the tempestuous sky seems to rush down in thunder-showers: then some of them particularly open their doors and windows to entertain their wished-for deliverer.

Do spiritually, what they do carnally. Constantly wait for full power from on bigh: but especially when a storm of affliction, temptation, or distress overtakes thee; or when thy convictions and defires raise thee above thyself, as the waters of the flood raised Noah's ark above the earth; then be particularly careful to throw the door of faith, and the window of bope as wide open as thou canst; and spreading the arms of thy impersect love, say with all the ardour and resignation, which thou art master of,

My heart-strings groan with deep complaint, My sless lies panting, Lord, for thee; And every limb, and every joint, Stretches for perfect purity.

But if the Lord is pleased to come foftly to thy help ; if he makes an end of thy corruptions by helping thee gently to fink to unknown depths of meekness; if he drowns the indwelling man of fin by baptizing -by plunging him into an abyss of humility; do not find fault with the fimplicity of his method, the plainness of his appearing, and the commonness of his prescription. Nature, like Naaman, is full of prejudices. She expects that Christ will come to make her clean with as much ado, pomp, and buftle, as the Syrian general looked for when be was wroth and faid, Behold I thought, he will furely come out to meand fland-and call on bis God-and strike bis HAND OVER the place—and recover the leper. Christ frequently goes a much plainer way to work: and by this means he disconcerts all our pre-conceived notions and schemes of deliverance. " Learn of me to be meek and lowly in heart, and thou shalt find reft to " thy foul,—the fiveet rest of christian perfection, " of perfect humility, refignation and meekness. " Lie at my feet, as the did who loved much, and was meekly taken up with the good part, and the one thing needful:" But thou frettest: Thou despisest this robe of perfection : It is too plain for B b 2

thee: Thou flightest the ornament of a meek and quiet pirit, which, in the fight of God, is of great price: Nothing will ferve thy turn but a tawdry coat of many colours, which may please thy proud felfwill, and draw the attention of others, by its glorious and flaming appearance; and it must be brought to thee with lightnings, thundrings, and poices. If this is thy disposition, wonder not at the divine wisdom, which thinks fit to disappoint thy lofty prejudices; and let me address thee as Naaman's servants addressed him: My brother, if the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldst thou not have done it? how much rather then, when be fays to thee, "I am the meek and lowly Lamb of "God, wash in the stream of my blood-plunge in " the fordan of my humility, and be clean?" Instead therefore of going away from a plain Jesus in a rage, welcome him in his lowest appearance, and be perfuaded that he can as eafily make an end of thy fin by gently coming in a fill, fmall voice, as by rushing in upon thee in a sterm, a fire, or an earthquake. The Jews rejected their Saviour, not fo much because they did not earnestly defire his coming, as because he did not come in the manner in which they expected him. It is probable that some of this judaism cleaves to thee. If thou wilt absolutely come to mount Sion in a triumphal chariot, or make thine entrance into the new Jerufalem upon a prancing horse, thou art likely never to come there. Leave then all thy lordly misconceptions behind; and humbly follow thy king, who makes his entry into the typical Jerusalem, meek, and lowly, riding upon an Ass, yea, upon a COLT, the fole of an afs. I fay it again therefore, whilst thy faith and hope strongly infist on the blesfing, let thy refignation and patience leave to God's infinite goodness and wisdom the peculiar manner of bestowing it. When he fays, Surely I come quickly to make my abode with thee, let thy faith close in with his word: Ardently and yet meekly embrace his promise: It will instantly beget power; and with

with that power thou mayest instantly bring forth prayer, and possibly the prayer which opens hear ven, humbly wrestles with God, inherits the bleffing, and turns the well-known petition, Amen, Even so, Come, Lord Jesus, into the well-known praises, He is come! He is come! Praise the Lord; O my foul, &c. - Thus repent, believe, and obey; and he that cometh, will come with a fulness of pure, meek, humble love: He will not tarry: Or if he tarries, it will be to give to thy faith and defires more time to open, that thou mayest at his appearing, be able to take in more of his perfecting grace and fanctifying power: Befides, thy expediation of his coming, is of a purifying nature, and gradually fanctifies thee. He that has this bope in him, by this very hope purifies bimfelf even as God is pure: For we are faved [into perfect love] by bope, as well as by faith. The falk bears the full corn in the car,

as well as the root.

Up then, thou fincere expectant of God's kingdom, let thy humble, ardent free-will meet prevenient, fanctifying free-grace in its weakest and darkest appearance; as the Father of the faithful met the Lord, when be appeared to bim in the plain of Mamre as a mere mortal. Abraham LIFTED UP his eyes and looked, and lo three men flood by bim : So does Free-grace [if I may venture upon the allafion] invite itself to thy tent: Nay, it is now with thee in its creating, redeeming, and fanctifying influences .- And when he faw them, he ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed bimjelf towards the ground. Go and do likewife: If thou feet anv beauty in the humbling grace of our Lord Tefus Christ, in the fanctifying love of God; and in the comfortable fellowship of the Holy Ghoft, let thy freewill run to meet them, and bow it felf toward the ground. O for a speedy going out of thy tent—thy finful felf! O for a race of defire in the way of faith! O for incessant prostrations! O for a meek and deep bowing of thy felf before thy divine deliverer !--And Abraham faid, my Lord, if now I have found! B b 3

favour in thy fight, pass not away, I pray thee, from thy servant. O for the humble pretting of a loving faith! O for the faith which Rope the fun, when God avenged bis people in the days of Joshua! O for the importunate faith of the two disciples, who detained Christ, when be made as though be would bave gone farther ! They constrained bim faying, abide with us, for it is towards evening, and the day is far. frent. And be went in to earry with them .- He foon indeed vanished out of their bodily fight, because they were not called akways to enjoy his bodily presence. Far from promising them that bleffing, he had faid, It is expedient for you that I go away : For if I go not away, the comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will fend him unto you-that he may abide with you FOR EVER .- He dwelleth with you. and fall be IN YOU. This promise is still yea and amen in Christ; only plead it according to the preceding directions, and as fure as our Lord is the true and faithful witness, so sure will the God of Hope. and love foon fill you with all joy and peace, that ye may abound in pure love, as well as in confirmed bope thro' the power of the Holy Ghoft. Then shall you have an indisputable right to join the believers who fing at the Tabernacle, and at the Lockchapel,

Many are we now, and one,
We who Jesus have put on:
There is neither bond nor free,
Male nor semale, Lord, in thee.
Love, like death, HATH ALL DESTROY'D,
RENDERED ALL distinctions vold:
Names, and sects, and parties fall:
Thou, O Christ, ART ALL IN ALL.

In the mean time you may fing with the pious Countess of Huntingdon—the Rev. Mr. Madan—the Rev. Dr. Conyiers—the Rev. Mr. Berridge—Richard Hill Esqr; and the impersectionists who use their collections of hymns, ye may fing I say, with them

them all, the two following hymns, which they have agreed to borrow from the hymns of Meffrs. Welley, after making fome infignificant alterations. I transcribe them from the collection used in Lady Huntingdon's chapels. Bristol edition, 1765, page 239, &c.

295)

O for an heart to praise my God!
An heart FROM SIN SET FREE:
An heart that's sprinkled with the blood.
So freely spilt for me.

An heart refign'd, submissive, meek,
My dear Redeemer's throne,
Where ONLY CHRIST IS HEARD to speak,
Where Jesus REIGNS ALONE.

An humble, lowly, contrite heart,
Believing, TRUE, and CLEAN,
Which neither life nor death can part
From HIM THAT DWELLS WITHIN.

And FILL'D WITH LOVE divine;
PERFECT, and RIGHT, and PURE, and GOOD,
A COPY, LORD, OF THINE. &c.

My heart, thou know's, can NEVER REST,

Till thou create my peace;

Till of mine Eden re-posses,

FROM SELF AND SIN I CEASE.

THY NATURE, gracious Lord, IMPART, COME QUICKLY FROM ABOVE;
Write thy NEW NAME upon my heart,
Thy new, BEST NAME of Love.

Here is undoubtedly an evangelical prayer for the love which restores the soul to a state of sinless rest, and evangelical perfection. Mean ye, my brethren, what the good people who distent from us wait for an answer to the prayer contained in the preceding hymn, in a more scriptural manner, than by pleading the promise of the Father in such words as these:

Love divine, all love excelling,

Joy of HEAVEN, to earth come DOWN!

FIX IN US thine humble dwelling,

All thy faithful mercies GROWN:

Jefus, thou art all compaffion,

PURE, unbounded LOVE THOU ART;

VISIT US with thy falvation,

ENTER EV'RY trembling HEART!

Breathe! O breathe thy LOVING SPIRITE.

Into ev'ry troubled breaft!

Let us ALL in Thee inherit,

Let us find thy * PROMIS'D REST.

TAKE AWAY THE † pow'r OF SINNING.

Alpha and OMEGA be;

END OF FAITH, as it's beginning.

Set our HEARTS AT LIBERTY.

Come! almighty to deliver,

Let us ALL THY LIFE receive!

SUDDENLY RETURN, and never,

NEVER MORE thy temples leave!

Thee we would be ALWAYS bleffing,

Serve thee AS THINE HOSTS ABOVE;

Pray, and praise thee WITHOUT CEASING,

Glory in thy precious ! love.

Finish

* Mr. Welley favs, SECOND reft, because an impersect believer enjoys a first, inserior, rest: if he did not, he would be no believer.

[†] Is not this expression too strong? Would it not be better to soften it as Mr. Hill has done, by saying, "Take away the love of" [or the BENT To] "finning?" Can God take-away from us our power of similing, without taking away our power of free obedience?

1. Mr. Wesley says perfect love, with St. John.

FINISH then thy new creation,
PURES, UNSPOTTED may we be:
Let us fee thy GREAT falvation,
PERFECTLY RESTOR'D by thee!
Chang'd FROM GLORY into glory,
Till in heaven we take our place;
Till we cast our crowns before thee,
Lost in wonder, love, and praise.

Lift up your hands which hang down: Our Aaron, our heavenly High-priest, is near to hold them up. The spiritual Amalekites will not always prevail: Our Samuel, our heavenly prophet, is ready to cut them and their king in pieces before the Lord. The promise is unto you. You are surely called to attain the perfection of your dispensation, altho' you seem still afar off. Christ, in whom that perfection centers;—Christ, from whom it flows, is very near, even at the door: Bebold, says he, [and this he spake to Laodicean loiterers] I sand

S Mr. Welley fays indeed, Pure and finles: But when Mr. Hill fings pure, unsported, he does not spoil the sense. For every body knows, that the pure, unsported Jesus, does not differ from the finless, immaculate Lamb of God. This fine hymn [I think] is not in Mr. Madan's collection, but he has probably sung it more than once. However, it is adopted in the Shawbur Collection, of which Mr. Hill is the publisher, in conjunction with Mr. De Courcy. Is it not surprizing, that, in his devotional warmth, that gentleman should print, give out, and sing Mr. Welley's strongest hymns for christian perfection; when, in his controversial heat, he writes so severely against this blessed state of heart? And may not I take my leave of him by an allusion to our Lord's words, Out of thy own manub—thy own from—thy own publications—thy own hymns—thy own prayers—thy own bible—thy own reason—thy own conscience—and [what is most associated associated the sense of the reason to any love for indwelling sin, but to the fatal error, which makes my pious opponent turn his back upon the genuine doctrines of grace and justice, and espouse the spurious doctrines of Calvinian grace and serverth.

open, I will come in, and sup with bim, upon the truits of my grace, in their christian perfection; and he shall sup with me, upon the fruits of my GLORY, in their angelical and heavenly maturity.

Hear his encouraging gospel: Ask, and you shall bave: Seek, and you shall find: Knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh, receiveth: and be that seeketh, findeth: and to bim that knocketb, it shall be opened .- If any of you [believers] lack wisdom, - indwelling wisdom, - [Christ, the wisdom and the power of God, dwelling in his heart by faith let bim ask of God, who giveth to all men, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let himask [as a believer] in faith, nothing wavering; for be that wavereth, is like a wave of the fea, driven with the wind and toffed : for let not that man think, that be shall receive the thing which be [thus] asketh .-But whatfoever things ye defire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall bave them. For, all things [commanded and promised] are possible to him that believeth. He, who has commanded us to be perfect in love as our beavenly Father is perfect, and he who has promised speedily to avenge bis elects who cry to him night and day;—He will speedily avenge you of your grand adversary, indivelling fin. He will fay to you. According to thy faith, be it done unto thee: for be is able to do far exceeding abundantly, above all that we can ask or think; and of his fulness we may all receive grace for grace: We may all witness the gracious fulfilment of all the promises, which he has graciously made, that by them we might be partakers of the divine nature, to far as it can be communicated to mortals in this world. You feethat, with men, what you look for is impossible: But show yourselves believers: Take God into the account, and you will foon experience, that with God all things are possible. Nor forget the omnipotent Advocate, whom you have with him. hold! he lifts his once-pierced hands, and fays, Father, fanclify them thro' thy [loving] truth-that

they may be perfected in one: And, shewing to you the fountain of atoning blood, and purifying water, whence flow the streams which cleanse and gladden the heart of believers, he fays, 4 Hitberto ye have asked nothing in my name :- Whatsoever you shall ask the Father in my name, be will give it you. -Ask then, that your joy may be full. If I try your faith by a little delay; -if I hide my face for a moment, it is only to gather you with everlasting kindness .- A woman, when she is in travail, bath forrow, because ber bour is come: but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish for joy. Now ye have forrow: but I will fee you again, and your beart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you. In that day ye shall ask me no question, for you shall not have my bodily prefence. But my Urim and Thummim will be with you; and the Spirit of truth will himself lead you into all [christian] truth.'

> O for a firm and lasting faith, To credit all th' almighty faith, T' embrace the Promise of his Son, And feel the Comforter our own,

In the mean time be not afraid to give glory to God by believing in hope, against hope. Stagger not at the Promise [of the Father and the Son] thro unbelief: but trust the power and faithfulness of your Creator and Redeemer, till your Sanctifier has fixed his abode in your heart. Wait at mercy's door, as the lame beggar did at the beautiful gate of the temple. Peter fastening his eyes upon him, with John, said, Look on us: And he gave heed to them, expecting to receive something of them.—Do so too: Give heed to the Father in the Son who says, Look unto me and he ye saved. Expect to receive the one thing now needful for you, a fulness of the sanctifying spirit. And tho' your patience may be tried, it shall not be disappointed. The faith and power, which [at Peter's

Peter's word] gave the poor cripple a perfect foundness in the presence of all the wondering jews, will give you [at Christ's word] a perfect soundness of heart, in the presence of all your adversaries.

"Faith, mighty Faith, the promise sees,
And looks to that alone,
Laughs at impossibilities,
And cries, It shall be done."—

Impossibilities are given:
And I, even I, from fin shall cease,
Shall live on earth the life of heaven."

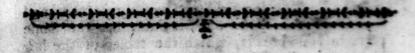
Faith always works by love; - by love of defire at least; making us ardently pray for what we believe to be eminently definable. And if christian perfection appears fo to you, you might perhaps express your earnest defire of it in some such words as these: ' How long, Lord, shall my soul-thy fpiritual temple, be a den of thieves, or an house of merchandise? How long shall vain thoughts prophane it, as the buyers and fellers prophaned thy temple made with human hands? How long shall evil tempers lodge within me? How long hall unbelief, formality, hypocrify, envy, hankering after fenfual pleasure, indifference to spiritual delights, and backwardness to painful or ignominious duty, harbour there? How long shall these sheep and doves, yea, these goats and serpents defile my breast, which should be pure as the Holy of Holies? How long shall they hinder me from being one of the worshippers whom thou seekest; one of those who worship thee in spirit and in truth? O help me to take away these cages of unclean birds. Suddenly come to thy temple. Turn out all that offends the eye of thy purity; and destroy all that keeps me out of the rest, which remains for thy christian people: So shall I keep a fpiritual sabbath—a christian jubilee to the God of

my life: So shall I witness my share in the oil of joy, with which thou anointest perfed christians above their fellow-believers. I fland in need of that oil, Lord: My lamp burns dim: Sometimes it feems to be even gone out, as that of the foolish virgins: It is more like a smoking flax, than a burning and shining light. O! quench it not: raise it to a flame. Thou knowest, that I do beraise it to a flame. lieve in thee. The trembling hand of my faith holds thee: and, tho' I have ten thousand times grieved thy pardoning love, thine everlasting arm is still under me, to redeem my life from destruction; while thy right hand is over me, to crown me with mercies and loving kindness. But alas! I am neither fufficiently thankful for thy prefent mercies, nor fufficiently athirst for thy future favours. Hence I feel an aching void in my foul; being conscious that I have notattained the heights of grace described in thy word, and enjoyed by thy holiest fervants. Their deep experiences, the diligence and ardour, with which they did thy will; the patience and fortitude with which they endured the cross, reproach me, and convince me of my manyfold wants. I want sower from on high: - I want the penetrating, lasting undien of the Holy One :- I want to have my veffel [my capacious heart] full of the oil, which makes the countenance of wife virgins chearful:- I want a lamp of heavenly illumination, and a fire of divine love, burning day and night in my breaft, as the typical lamps did in the temple, and the facred fire on the altar :- I want a full application of the blood which cleanfes from all fin, and a strong faith in thy fanctifying word ; - a faith by which thou mayest dwell in my beart, as the unwavering bope of glory, and the fixed object of my love :-I want the internal Oracle—thy fill, fmall voice, together with Urim and * Thummim,-the new

^{*} Two hebrew words, which mean Lights and Perfections.

ame, which none knoweth, but he that receiveth it. In a word, Lord, I want a plenitude of thy Spirit, the full promise of the Father, and the riwers which flow from the inmost foul of the believers, who have gone on to the perfection of thy dispensation. I do believe that thou canst, and wilt thus baptize me with the Holy Ghoft and with fire: Help my unbelief: Confirm and increase my faith, with regard to this important baptism. Lord, I have need to be thus baptized of thee, and I am straitened till this baptism is accomplished. By thy baptisms of tears in the manger-of water in Jordan-of sweat in Gethsemane-of blood and fire, and vapour of smoke, and flaming wrath on · Calvary, baptize, Oh baptize my foul, and make as full an end of the original fin which I have from Adam, as thy last baptism made of the like-· ness of finful flesh which thou hadst from a daughter of Eve. Some of thy people look at death for full falvation from fin; but, at thy command, Lord, I look unto THEE. Say to my foul, I am thy falvation: And let me feel in my heart, as well as fee with my understanding that thou canst fave from fin to the uttermost, all that come to God thro bee. I am tired of forms, professions, and orthodox notions; so far as they are not pipes or channels to convey life, light, and love to my dead, dark, and itony heart. Neither the plain · letter of thy gospel, nor the sweet foretastes and transient illuminations of thy Spirit, can fatisfy the large defires of my faith. Give me thine abiding Spirit, that he may continually shed abroad thy love in my foul. Come, O Lord, with that bleffed Spirit :- Come Thou, and thy Father, in that holy Comforter,—Come to make your abode with me; or I shall go meekly mourning to my grave.—Bleffed mourning! Lord, increase it. had rather wait in tears for thy fulness, than wantonly waste the fragments of thy spiritual bounties, or feed with Laodicean contentment upon the tainted manna of my former experiences. Righteous Father, I hunger and thirst after thy

righteousness: Send thy Holy Spirit of promise to fill me therewith, to sanctify me thro-out, and to seal me centrally to the day of eternal redemption, and finished salvation. Not for works of righteousness which I have done, but of thy mercy, for Christ's sake, save thou me by the complete washing of regeneration, and the full renewing of the Holy Ghost. And in order to this, pour out of thy Spirit; shed it ABUNDANTLY on me, till the fountain of living water abundantly spring up in my soul, and I can say, in the full sense of the words, that thou livest in me, that my life is hid with thee in God, and that my spirit is returned to Him that gave it—to Thee, the First and the Last,—my Author and my End—my God and my all!



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SECTION XX.

An Address to perfett Christians.

Yain, O ye men of God, who have mixed faith with your evangelical requests. The God who says, Open thy mouth wide and I will fill it;—the gracious God who declares, Blessed are they that hunger after righteousness, for they shall be filled:—that faithful, covenant-keeping God has now filleving. The brighteousness, peace, and joy in believing. The brightness of Christ's appearing has destroyed the indwelling man of sin. He who had sliain the lion and the bear [he who had already done so great things for you] has now crowned all his blessings by slaying the Goliath within. Aspiring,

unbelieving self is fallen before the victorious Son of David. The quick and powerful word of God, which is sharper than any two-edged sword, has pierced even to the dividing afunder of foul and Spirit. The carnal mind is cut off: The circumcifion of the beart, thre' the Spirit, has fully taken place in your breasts: And now, that mind is in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Ye are spiritually-minded: Louing God with all your heart, and your neighbour as yourselves, ye are full of goodness, ye keep the commandments, ye observe the law of liberty, ye fulfil the law of Christ. Of bim ye have learned to be meek and lowly in heart. Ye have FULLY taken his yoke upon you; in so doing ye have found a sweet, abiding rest unto your fouls; and from bleffed experience ye can fay, " Christ's yoke is easy, and bis burden is. light:—His ways are ways of pleasantness, and all his paths are peace:—All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth, unto fuch as keep his covenant, and his teftimonies." The beatitudes are fenfibly yours: and the Charity described by St. Paul, has the same place in your breafts, which the tables of the law had in the ark of the covenant. Ye are the living temples of the Trinity: The Father is your life. the Son your light, the Spirit your love: Ye are truly baptized into the mystery of God, ye continue to drink into one spirit, and thus ye enjoy the grace of both facraments. There is an end of your Lo bere! and Lo there! The kingdom of God is now established within you. Christ's righteoufness. peace, and joy are rooted in your breasts by the Holy Ghoft given unto you, as an abiding guide and indwelling Comforter. Your introverted eye of faith looks at God, who gently guides you with his eye into all the truth necessary to make you do justice, love mercy, and walk bumbly with your God. Simplicity of intention keeps darkness out of your mind, and purity of affection keeps wrong fires out of your breaft. By the former ye are without guile; by the latter ye are without envy. Your passive will instantly melts into the will of God; and on

all occasions you meekly fay, Not my will, O Father, but thine be done : Thus are ye always ready to SUFFER what you are called to fuffer. Your active: will evermore fays, Speak, Lord; thy fervant beareth: What wouldest thou have me to do? It is my meat and drink to do the will of my beavenly Father: Thus are ye always ready to Do whatfoever ye are convinced that God calls you to do; and whatfoever ge do, whether ye eat, or drink, or do any thing elfe, ye do all to the glory of God, and in the name of our Lord Tefus Christ; rejoicing evermore; praying without ceafing; in every thing giving thanks ; folemnly looking for, and basting unto the hour of your dissolution, and the day of God, wherein the beavens being on fir shall be diffelved, and your foul, being clothed with a celestial body, shall be able to do celestial fervices to the God of your life.

In this blessed state of christian perfection, the holy anointing, which ye have received of him, abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you, unless it he as the same anointing teacheth. Agreeably therefore, to that anointing, which teaches by a variety of means, which formerly taught a prophet by an ass, and daily instructs God's children by the ant, I shall venture to set before you some important directions, which the Holy Ghost has already suggested to your pure minds': For I would not be negligent to put you in remembrance of these things, the ye know them, and he established in the present truth. Yea, I think it meet to stir you up, by putting you in remembrance, and giving you some hints, which it is

fafe for you frequently to meditate upon.

I. Adam, ye know, lost his buman perfection in paradise: Satan lost his angelic perfection in beaven: The devil thrust fore at Christ in the wilderness, to throw him down from his mediatorial perfection: And St. Paul, in the same Epistles where he professes not only christian, but apostolic perfection also [Phil. iii. 15. 1 Cor. ii. 6. 2 Cor. xii. 11.] informs us, that he continued to run for the crown of beavenly perfection like a man, who might not only C. C. 3.

The

lose his crown of christian perfection, but become a reprobate, and be cast away, I Cor. ix. 25, 27. And therefore so run ye also, that no man take your crown of christian perfection in this world, and that ye may obtain your crown of angelic perfection in the world to come. Still keep your body under. Still guard your senses. Still watch your own heart; and, sedfast in the faith, still rest the devil, that he may see from you; remembering that it Christ himself [as Son of man], had conferred with selb and blood, refused to deny himself, and avoided taking up his cross; he had lost his perfection, and sealed up our original apostacy.

We do not find, [fays Mr. Wester, in his Plain Account of Christian Persedion] any general state described in scripture, from which a man cannot draw back to fin. If there were any state where in this was impossible, it would be that of those who are fandisted, who are Fathers in Christ, who rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, and in every thing give thanks. But it is not impossible for these to draw back. They who are fandisted, may yet fall and perish, Heb. x. 29. Even Fathers in Christ, need that warning, Love not the world, I John, ii. 15. They who rejoice, pray, and give thanks without ceasing, may nevertheless quench the Spirit, I Thess. v. 16, &c. Nay, even they who are scaled unto the day of redemption, may yet grieve the Holy Spirit of Gad. Eph. v. 30.

^{*} We do not hereby deny, that some believers have a testimony in their own breast, that they shall not finally fall from God. They may have it " [says Mr. Wesley in the same tract] and this persuasion, that neither life nor death shall separate them from God, far from being hurtful, may in some circumstances be extremely useful." But wherever this testimony is divine, it is attended with that grace which inseparably connects holiness and good works [the means] with perseverance and eternal salvation [the ind:] and, in this respect, our doctrine widely differs from that of the Calvinists, who break the necessary connection between holiness and infallible salvation, by making room for the foulest falls;—for adultery, murder, and incess.

The doctrine of the absolute perseverance of the faints, is the first card which the devil play'd against man: " Ye Shall not surely die, if ye break " the law of your perfection." This fatal card won the game. Mankind and paradife were loft. The artful ferpent had too well succeeded at his first game, to forget that lucky card at his second See him transforming bimfelf into an angel of light on the pinnacle of the temple. There he plays over again, his old game against the Son of God. Out of the bible he pulls the very card, which won our first parents, and swept the stake-paradife-yea, swept it with the besom of destruction. Cast thyfelf down. fays he, for it is written, that all things shall work together for thy good, thy very falls not excepted :their bands they Shall bear thee up, left at any time than dash thy foot against a stone: The tempter [thanks be to Christ lost the game at that time; but he did not lose his card; and it is probable that he will play it round against you all; only with some variation. Let me mention one among a thousand. Hepromised our Lord that God's angels should bear bim up in their bands, if be throw himself down; and it is not unlikely that he will promife you greater things. still. Nor should I wonder if he was bold enough to hint, that, when you cast yourselves down, God himself shall bear you up in bis HANDS, yea in bis ARMS of everlasting love. O ye men of God, learn wisdom by the fall of Adam. O ye anointed fons of the Most High, learn watchfulness by the conduct of Christ. If he was afraid to tempt the Lord bis God. will be dare to do it? If he rejected as poison, the hook of the absolute perseverance of the faints, tho it was baited with scripture, will ye swallow it down, as if it were bony out of the rock of ages? - No: thro' fairb in Christ the scriptures have made you wife unto Salvation: You will not only fly with all speed from evil, but from the very appearance of evil : And when you fland on the brink of a temptation. far from entering into it, under any pretence what-EVET:

that [evangelically-speaking] the weakness of the sless is not sin; but yet the deceitfulness of sin creeps in at this door; and by this means not a tew of God's children, after they had escaped the pollutions of the world, through the sanctifying knowledge of Christ, under plausible pretences, have been again intangled therein and overcome. Let their salls make you cautious. Ye have put on the whole armour of God: O keep it on, and use it with all prayer, that ye may, to he last, stand complete in Christ, and be more than conquerors thro' him that has loved you.

II. Remember that Every one who is perfect, Shall! be as bis Master. Now if your Master was tempted and affaulted to the last; -if, to the last he watched . and pray'd; using all the means of grace himself. and enforcing the use of them upon others;—if to the last he fought against the world, the slesh, and the devil, and did not put off the barness till he had: put off the body; think not yourselves above him; but Go and do likewife. If he did not regain paradife, without going thro' the most complete renunciation of all the good things of this world, and without meekly fubmitting to the fevere ftroke: of his last enemy, death; be content to be perfect. as be was; nor fancy that your flesh and blood can inherit the celettial kingdom of God, when the flesh and blood which Emmanuel himself assumed from a pure virgin, could not inherit it without. paffing under the cherub's flaming fword: I mean, without going thre' the gates of death.

III. Ye are not complete in wisdom. Perfect love does not imply pertect knowledge: but perfect humility, and perfect readiness to receive instruction. Remember therefore, that if ever ye shew, that ye are above being instructed, even by

a fisherman who teaches according to the divine anointing, ye will shew that ye are fallen from a perfection of humility into a perfection of pride.

IV. Do not confound angelical, with christian perfection. Uninterrupted transports of praise, and ceaseless raptures of joy, do not belong to christian, but to angelical perfection. Our feeble frame can bear but a few drops of that glorious cup. In general, that new wine is too firong for our old bottles; that power is too excellent for our earthen, cracked wellels; but, weak as they are, they can bear a fulness of meckness, of refignation, of bumility, and of that love, which is willing to obey unto death. If God indulges you with extalies, and extraordinary revelations; be thankful for them: But be not exalted above measure by them: Take care lest enthufiastic delusions mix themselves with them: And remember, that your christian perfection does not to much confift in building a tabernacle upon mount Fabor, to rest and enjoy rare fights there; as in refolutely taking up the crofs, and following Christ to the palace of a proud Caiaphas, to the judgmenthall of an unjust Pilate, and to the top of an ignominious Calvary. Ye never READ in your bibles. Let that glory be upon you, which was also upon St. Stephen, when be boked up fledfafth into beaven, and faid, Behold I fee the beavens open'd, and the Son of man flanding on the right band of God." But ye have frequently read there, Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus, who made bimfelf of no reputation, took upon him the form of a ferwant, and being found in fashion as a man, bumbled bimfelf, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

See him on that ignominious gibbet: he hangs—abandoned by his friends—furrounded by his foes—condemned by the rich—insulted by the poor.—He hangs;—a worm and no man—a very scorn of men, and the out-cast of the people.—All that see him, laugh him to scorn. They shoot out their

their lips, and shake their heads, faying, He trusted in God, that he would deliver him: Let him deliver him, if he will have him.—There is none to help him: -One of his apostles denies, another fells him; and the rest run away. Many oxen are come about him :- Fat bulls of Bafan close him on every fide-they gape upon him with their mouths, as it were a ramping lion :- He is poured out like water -- his heart in the midst of his body is like melting wax : -his strength is dried up like a potsherd:-his tongue cleaveth to his gums :- he is going into the dust of death :- Many dogs are come about him :- and the counsel of the wicked layeth fiege against him :- His hands and feet are pierced: -You may tell all his bones :-They fland flaring and looking upon him :- They part his garments among them, and cast lots for the only remain of his property, his plain, feamless vesture. Both Suns, the visible and the invisible, feem eclipsed. No chearing beam of created light gilds his gloomy prospect. No smile of his heavenly Father supports his agonizing soul. No cordial funless it be vinegar and gall revives his finking spirits. He has nothing left, except bis God. But his God is enough for him. In his God he has all things. And the' his foul is feized with forrow, even unto death; yet it hangs more firmly upon his God by a naked faith, than his lacerated body does on the crofs by the clinched nails. The perfection of his love shines in all its christian glory. He not only forgives his infulting foes and bloody perfecutors; but in the highest point of his passion he forgets his own wants, and thirsts after their eternal happiness. Together with his blood, he pours out his foul for them; and excufing them all he fays, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. O ye adult fons of God, in this glass behold all with open face the glory of your Redeemer's forgiving, praying love; and, as ye behold it, be changed into the jame image from glory to glory, by the loving Spirit of the Lord. V.

V. This leffon is deep: but he may teach you one deeper still. By a strong sympathy with him in all his fufferings, he may call you to know bine every way crucified. Stern Justice thunders from heaven, Awake, O sword, against the man who is my fellow! The fword awakes—the fword goes thro' his foul—the flaming fword is quenched in his blood. But is one finew of his perfect faith cut, one FIBRE of his perfect refignation injur'd. by the aftonishing blow? No: His God slays him, and yet he trufts in his God. By the noblest of all ventures, in the most dreadful of all storms, he meekly bows his head, and shelters his departing foul in the bosom of bis God .- " My God! My God! fays he, tho' all thy comforts have for faken me, and all thy storms and waves go over me, yet into THY bands I commend my fpirit .- For thou wilt not leave my foul in hell; neither wilt thou fuffer thine boly one to fee corruption. Thou wilt show me the path of life, in thy presence is fulness of joy, and at thy right band [where I shall foon sit] there are pleasures for evermore."—What a pattern of perfect confidence! O ye perfect christians, be ambitious to ascend to those amazing heights of Christ's perfection: For even bereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us; leaving us an example, that ye should follow bis fleps: who knew no fin, who, when be was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered be threatned not, but COMMITTED HIMSELF to bim that judgeth righteoufly. If this is your high calling on earth, rest not, O ye Fathers in Christ, till your patient hope, and perfect confidence in God, have got their last victory over your last enemy-the king of terrors.

The ground of a thousand missakes [says Mr. Wesly] 'is, the not considering deeply, that love is the highest gift of God, bumble, gentle, patient love: that all visions, revelations, manifestations whatever, are little things compared to love.

-It were well you should be throughly sensible of this: The heaven of heavens is love. There

is nothing higher in religion: there is, in effect, nothing else. If you look for any thing but more love, you are looking wide of the mark, you are getting out of the royal way. And when you are asking others, Have you received this or that bleffing? if you mean any thing but more love, you mean wrong: you are leading them out of the way, and putting them upon a false scent. Settle it then in your heart, that from the moment God has saved you from all fin, you are to aim at nothing, but more of that love described in the thirteenth of the Corinthians. You can go no higher than this, till you are carried into Abraham's bosom.

VI. Love is humble. 'Be therefore clothed with bumility, ' fays Mr. Wesley: 'Let it not only fill, but cover you all over. Let modesty and felfdiffidence appear in all your words and actions. Let all you speak and do, shew that you are little, and base, and mean, and vile in your own eyes. As one instance of this, be always ready to own any fault you have been in. If you have at any time thought, spoke, or acted wrong, be onot backward to acknowledge it. Never dream ' that this will hurt the cause of God: no, it will further it. Be therefore open and frank, when you are taxed with any thing: Let it appear just as it is; and you will thereby not hinder, but adorn the gospel.'—Why should ye be more backward in acknowledging your failings than in confeffing that ye do not pretend to infallibility. St. Paul was perfect in the love which casts out fear. and therefore he boldly reproved the high priest: But, when he had reproved him more sharply than the fifth commandment allows, he directly confeffed his mistake, and fet his seal to the importance of the duty, in which he had been inadvertently wanting. Then Paul said, I KNEW NOT, brethren. that he was the high-priest: For it is written, Thou halt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people. St. John was perfect in the courteous, humble love, which brings

brings us down at the feet of all. His courtefy, his humility, and the dazzling glory, which beamed forth from a divine messenger [whom he apprehended to be more than a creature] betrayed him into a fault contrary to that of St. Paul; but far from concealing it, he openly confessed it, and published his confession for the edification of all the churches. When I had heard and seen [says he] I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel who showed me these things. Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not, for I am thy fellow servant. Christian perfection shines as much in the childlike simplicity, with which the perfect readily acknowledge their saults; as it does in the manly steadiness, with which they resist unto blood, striving against sin.

VII. If humble love makes us frankly confess our faults, much more does it incline us to own ourselves sinners-miserable sinners before that God, whom we have fo frequently offended. I need net remind you, that your bodies are dead because of fine You fee, you feel it, and therefore, fo long as you dwell in a prison of flesh and blood, which death [the revenger of fin] is to pull down;—fo long as your final justification [as pardoned and fanctified finners] has not taken place :- Yea, fo long as you break the law of paradifiacal perfection, under which you were originally placed, it is meet, right, and your bounden duty to confider yourselves as finners, who, [as transgressors of the law of innecence and the law of liberty] are guilty of death -of eternal death. St. Paul did fo after he was come to mount Sion, and to the Spirits of just men made perfect. He still looked upon himself as the chief finners, because he HAD BEEN a daring blasphemer of Christ, and a fierce persecutor of his people. Christ, fays he, came to fave SINNERS, of whom I AM CHIEF. The reason is plain. Matter of fact is, and will be matter of fact to all eternity. According to the doctrines of grace and justice, and before the throne of God's mercy and holines, a finner pardoned and fanctified must, in the very nature Dd

of things be confidered as a finner, for if you confider him as a faint, absolutely abstracted from the character of a finner, how can he be a pardon'd and fanctified SINNER? To all eternity therefore, but much more while death [the wages of fin] is at your heels, and while ye are going to appear before the judgment-feat of Christ, to receive your final sentence of absolution or condemnation; it will become you to say with St. Paul, We have all sinned and come short of the glory of God: being justified freely [As SINNERS] by his grace, thro' the redemption that is in Jesus Christ—altho' we are justified judicially, As Believers, thro' faith;—As obedience Indicially, As Believers, thro' faith; and As Perfect Christians, thro' christian perfection.

VIII. Humble love becomes all things [but fin] to all men, altho' it delights most in those who are most holy. Ye may, and ought to fet your love of peculiar complacence upon God's dearest children-upon those who, like yourselves, excel in virtue; because they more strongly reflect the image of the God of LOVE, the HOLY one of Ifrael. But, if ye despise the weak, and are above lending them an helping hand; ye are fallen from christian perfection, which teaches us to bear one another's burdens, especially the burdens of the weak. Imitate there the tenderness and wisdom of the good Shepherd, who carries the lambs in his bosom. gently leads the sheep which are big with young, feeds with milk those who cannot bear strong meat. and fays to his imperfect disciples, I have many things to say to you, but ye cannot bear them now.

IX. Where the loving Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. Keep therefore at the utmost distance from the shackles of a narrow, prejudiced, bigoted spirit. The moment ye confine your love to the people who think just as you do, and your regard to the preachers who exactly suit your taste, you fall from perfection and turn bigots. 'I intreat 'you,

you' [fays Mr. Welley, in his Plain Account] beware of bigotry. Let not your love, or beneficence, be confined to Methodiffs (so called) only : much less to that very small part of them, who feem to be renewed in love : or to those who believe your's and their report. O make not this ' your Shibboleth.'-On the contrary, as ye have time and ability, do good to all men. Let your benevolence shine upon all: let your charity send its cherishing beams towards all, in proper degrees. So shall ye be perfect as your beavenly Father, who makes bis fun to shine upon all; altho' he fends the brightest and warmest beams of his favour upon the boufbold of faith, and referves his richest bounties for those, who lay out their five talents to the best advantage.

X. Love, pure love, is fatisfied with the supreme Good-with God. ' Beware then of defiring any thing but bim. Now you defire nothing elfe. Every other defire is driven out: fee that none enter in again. Keep thyfelf pure: Let your eye remain fingle, and your whole body shall be full of light. Admit no defire of pleafing food, or any other pleasure of sense: no defire of pleasing the eye or the imagination: no defire of money, of praife, or esteem; of happiness in any creature. You may bring these desires back; but you need not; you may feel them no more. O stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ bath made you free. Be patterns to all of denying yourselves, and taking up your crofs daily. Let them fee that ' you make no account of any pleasure, which does not bring you nearer to God; nor regard any ' pain which does: that you fimply aim at pleafing him, whether by doing or fuffering: that the confant language of your heart, with regard to pleasure or pain, honour or dishonour, riches or poverty, is,

All's alike to me, fo I

In my Lord may live and die!

XI. The best foldiers are fent upon the most difficult and dangerous expeditions: and as you are the best foldiers of Jesus Christ, ye will probably be called to drink deepest of his cup, and to carry the heaviest burdens. 'Expect contradiction and opposition' [says the judicious divine, whom I have just quoted] ' together with crosses of various * kinds. Confider the words of St. Paul, To you it is given in the behalf of Christ, for his fake, as a fruit of his death and intercession for you, " not only to believe, but also to SUFFER for bis fake, Phil. i. 23. It is given! God gives you this opposition or reproach: it is a fresh token of his · love. And will you disown the giver? Or spurn. his gift, and count it a misfortune? Will you onot rather fay, "Father, the hour is come, that " thou shouldst be glorified. Now thou givest thy " child, to fuffer fomething for thee. Do with me according to thy will."— Know that these things, far from being HINDERANCES to the work of God, or to your foul, unless by your own fault, are not only unavoidable in the course of providence, but profitable, yea necessary for vou. Therefore receive them from God (not from chance) with willingness, with thankfulfulness. Receive them from men with humility. " meekness, yieldingness, gentleness, sweetness."

Love can never do, nor fusser too much for its divine object. Be then ambitious, like St. Paul, to be made perfect in sufferings. I have already observed that the apostle, not satisfied to be a perfect christian, would also be a perfect martyr; earnestly desiring to know the fellowship of Christ's [utmost] sufferings. Follow him, as he followed his suffering, crucissed Lord. Your feet are shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace, run after them both in the race of obedience, for the crown of martyrdom, if that crown is reserved for you. And if ye miss the crown of those who are martyrs in deed, ye shall however receive the reward of those who are martyrs in intention—the crown of righteousness and angelical perfection.

XII. But do not fo defire to follow Christ to the garden of Gethjemane, as to refuse following him now to the carpenter's shop, if providence now calls you to it. Do not lose the present day by idly looking back at yesterday, or foolishly antedating the cares of to-morrow: But wifely use every hour; spending them as one who stands on the verge of sime—on the border of eternity, and who has his work cut out by a wife providence from moment to moment. Never therefore neglect using the two talents you have now, and doing the duty which is now incumbent upon you. Should ye be tempted to it, under the plaufible pretence of waiting for a greater number of talents; remember that God doubles our talents in the way of duty, and that it is a maxim advanced by Elisha Coles himself, ase grace and have [more] grace. Therefore, " to " continual watchfulness and prayer, add continu-" al employment, fays Mr. Welley, for grace flies 4 a vacuum as well as nature ; the devil fills whatever God does not fill."-" As by works faith is " made perfect, so the completing or destroying the work of faith, and enjoying the favour or fuffering the displeasure of God, greatly depends on " every fingle act of obedience."-If you forget this, you will hardly do now whatfoever your hand findeth to do. Much less will you do it with all your might-for God-for eternity.

XIII. Love is modest: It rather inclines to bashfulness and silence, than to talkative forwardness. In a multitude of words there wanteth not sin: Be therefore show to steak; nor cast your pearls before those who cannot distinguish them from pebbles. Nevertheless, when you are solemnly called upon, to bear testimony to the truth, and to say what great things. God has done for you; it would be cowardice, or salse prudence, not to do it with humility. Be then always ready to give an answer to every man who sproperly asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness [without sluttering anxiety] and D d 3.

with fear [with a reverential awe of God upon your minds] 1 Pet. iii. 15. The perfect are burning and shining lights, and our Lord intimates, that, as a candle is not lighted to be put under a bushel, but upon a candleflick; that it may give light to all the bouje: fo God does not light the candle of pertect love to hide it in a corner, but to give light to all those who are within the reach of its brightness. If diamonds glitter, it stars shine, if slowers display their colours, and perfumes diffuie their fragrance, to the honour of the Father of lights, and Author of every good gift: If, without felf-feeking, they disclose bis glory to the utmost of their power, why should ye not yo, and do likewife? --- Gold answers its most valuable end when it is brought to light, and made to circulate for charitable and pious ules; and not when it lies concealed in a mifer's strong box, or in the dark bosom of a mine. But when you lay out your spiritual gold for proper uses, beware of imitating the vanity of those coxcombs, who, as often as they are about to pay for a trifle, pull out an handful of gold, merely to make a flew of their wealth.

AIV. Love, or Charity, rejoiceth in the [display of an edifying] truth. Fact is fact all the world over. If you can say to the glory of God, that you are alive, and seel very well, when you do so; why could you not also testify to his honour, that you live not, but that Christ liveth in you; if you really find that this is your experience? Did not St. John say, Our love is made perfect—because as be is, so are we in this world? Did not St. Paul write, The rightconsness of the law is sulfilled in us, who walk after the Spirit? Did he not with the same simplicity aver, that altho' be bad nothing, and was sorrowful, yet he possessed all things, and was akways rejoicing?

Hence it appears, that, with respect to the declaring or concealing what God has done for your foul, the line of your duty runs exactly between

the proud forwardness of some stiff pharifees, and the voluntary bumility of some stiff mystics. The former vainly boast of more than they experience: and, by that means, they fet up the curfed idol, felf: The latter ungratefully hide the wonderfu everks of God, which the primitive christians for publicly in a variety of languages; and, by this means, they refuse to exalt their gracious Benefactor, Chrift. The first error is undoubtedly more odious than the fecond; but, what need is there of leaning to either? Would ye avoid them both? Let your TEMPERS and LIVES akways declare, that perfect love is attainable in this life. And when you have a proper call to declare it with your list and sens, do it without forwardness, to the glory of God; do it with simplicity, for the edification of your neighbour; do it with godly jealoufy, left ye should shew the treasures of divine grace in your hearts, with the same self-complacence, with which King Hezekiah shewed his treasures, and the golden vessels of the temple to the ambassadors of the king of Babylon, remembering what a a dreadful curse this piece of vanity pulled down upon him: And Isaiab said unto Hezekiab, Hear the word of the Lord. Behold, the days come, that all that is in thine bouje shall be carried into Babylon: nothing shall be left, faith the Lord. If God fo severely punished Hezekiah's pride, how properly does St. Peter charge believers to give WITH FEAR an account of the grace qubich is in them! and how careful should ye be to observe his important charge!

XV. If you will keep at the utmost distance from the vanity which proved so fatal to good King Hezekiah, sollow an excellent direction of Mr. Wesley. When you have done any thing for God, or 'received any savour from him, retire, if not into your close, into your beart, and say, "I come, Lord, to restore to thee what thou hast given, and I freely relinquish it, to enter again into my own nothingness. For what is the most perfect

se perfect creature in heaven or earth in thy pre-" fence, but a void, capable of being filled with " thee and by thee, as the air which is void and " dark, is capable of being filled with the light of the fun? Grant therefore, O Lord, that I may never appropriate thy grace to myfelf, any " more than the air appropriates to itself the light " of the fun, who withdraws it every day to re-" flore it the next; there being nothing in the " air, that either appropriates his light or refifts " it. O give me the same facility of receiving " and restoring the grace and good works! I fay, 44 thine: for I acknowledge that the root from " which they fpring, is in thee and not in me."-"The true means to be filled anew with the riches " of grace, is thus to Arip ourselves of it: with-44 out this it is extremely difficult not to faint in " the practice of good works. "-" And therefore, "that your good works may receive their last " perfection, let them lose themselves in God. "This is a kind of death to them, refembling 44 that of our bodies, which will not attain their 44 highest life, their immortality, till they lose " themselves in the glory of our souls, or rather of God wherewith they shall be filled And it " is only what they had of earthly and mortal, " which good works lofe by this fpiritual death."

XVI. Would ye see this deep precept put in practice? Consider St. Paul. Already possessed of christian persection, he does good works from morning till night: He warns every one night and day with tears. He carries the Gospel from east to west. Wherever he stops, he plants a church at the hazard of his life. But instead of resting in his present persection, and in the good works which spring from it, he grows in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ; unweariedly sollowing after, if that he may apprehend that [persection] for which also be is apprehended of Christ Jesus,—that celestial persection, of which he got lively ideas, when

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when he was caught up to the third beaven, and beard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter. With what amazing ardor does he run his race of christian perfection for the prize of that higher perfection! How does he forget the works of yesterday, when he lays himself out for God to-day! Tho' dead, be yet speaketh, nor can an address to perfect christians be closed by a more proper speech than his. Brethren, says he, Be followers of me-I count not myself to bave apprehended [my angelical perfection:] but THIS ONE THING I DO, forgetting those things which are behind [fettling in none of my former experiences, refting in none of my good works,] and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press towards the mark, for the [celestial] prize of the bigb calling of God in Christ Jefus. Let us therefore, as many as are PERFECT, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwife minded, God shall reveal even this unto you. In the mean time you may fing the following hymn of the Rev. Mr. Charles Welley, which is descriptive of the destruction of corrupt self-will, and expressive of the absolute refignation which characterises a perfect believer.

To do, or not to do; to have,
Or not to have, I leave to Thee:
To be, or not to be I leave:
Thy only will be done in me.
All my requests are lost in one,
Father, thy only will be done.

Suffice that, for the season past,
Myself in things divine I sought,
For comforts cried with eager haste,
And murmur'd that I sound them not:
I leave it now to thee alone,
Father, thy only will be done.

Thy gifts I clamour for no more,
Or felfishly thy grace require
An evil heart to varnish o'er;
Jesus the Giver I desire;
After the flesh no longer known:
Father, thy only will be done.

Welcome alike the crown or cross;

Trouble I cannot ask, nor peace,

Nor toil, nor rest, nor gain, nor loss,

Nor joy, nor grief, nor pain, nor ease,

Nor life, nor death: but ever groan,

Father, thy only will be done.

This hymn fuits all the believers who are at the bottom of mount Sion, and begin to join the spirits of just men made perfect. But when the triumphal chariot of perfect love gloriously carries you to the top of perfection's hill;—when you are raised far above the common heights of the perfect—when you are almost translated into glory like Elijah, then you may fing another hymn of the same christian poet, with the Rev. Mr. Madan, and the numerous body of imperfectionists who use his collection of Psalms, &c.

Who in Jesus confide,
They are bold to out-ride
The storms of affliction beneath:
With the prophet they foar
To that heavenly shore,
And out-sty all the arrows of death.

By Faith we ARE COME
To our PERMANENT HOME;
By Hope we THE RAPTURE IMPROVE:
By love we STILL RISE,
And LOOK DOWN on the skies—
For the HEAVEN OF HEAVENS IS LOVE!

Who on earth can conceive
How happy we LIVE
In the city of God the great King!
What a concert of praise,
When our Jesus's grace
The whole heavenly company fing!

What a rapturous fong,
When the glorified throng
In the spirit of harmony join!
Join all the glad choirs,
Hearts, voices, and lyres,
And the burthen is mercy divine!

But when you cannot follow Mr. Madan, and the imperfectionists of the Lock-chapel, to those rapturous heights of perfection, you need not give up your shield. You may still rank among the perfect, if you can heartily join in this version of Ps. cxxxi.

Lord, thou dost the grace impart!
POOR IN SPIRIT, MEEK IN HEART,
I will as my Master be
ROOTED in humility.

Now, dear Lord, that thee I know, Nothing will I feek below, Aim at nothing great or high, LOWLY both IN HEART and EYE.

SIMPLE, TEACHABLE, and MILD. Aw'd into a LITTLE CHILD, Quiet now without my food, Wean'd from ev'ry creature good,

Hangs my new-born foul on thee, Kept from ALL idolatry; Nothing wants beneath, above, Resting in thy perfect love.

That

That your earthen vessels may be filled with this love till they break, and you enjoy the divine Object of your faith without an interposing veil of gross flesh and blood, is the wish of one who sincerely praises God on your account, and ardently prays,

"Make up thy jewels, Lord, and shew The glorious, spotless church below. The fellowship of faints make known; And Oh! my God, might I be one!

O might my lot be cast with these,
The least of Jesu's witnesses!
O that my Lord would count me meet
To wash his dear disciples seet!

To wait upon his faints below!
On gospel-errands for them go!
Enjoy the grace to angels given!
And serve the royal heirs of heaven!"

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ERRATA.

Those to which an afterism is prefixed affect the sense.

Page. Line. - Last word, fack- read fackcloth vii. - 18 the and in all other places where this word occurs,

15 — 7 paradifical read paradificant
and in all other places where this word occurs,

19 Cancel the three last lines of the contents of SECT. II.

24 — 13 peccabile read peccable

24 — 25 perfettionity read on 6 Since. 25 — 7 perfectionists read perfections 39 (Nate.) 2 in-forms read informs 74 last line but two, or read of read Philippians 79 - 15 Phillipians believer read believers and do read and doing 92 - 27 Many read [Many 104 - 16 - 19 IMMEDIATLY read MEDIATLY 138 — 30 simourousness read simorousness 153 — 1 where read Is it where - 31 fin. -A read fin,-a 157 - 22 Argument, &c. read Arg. 1. Sect. x 164 include line 30, 31, 32 in commas-182 — 9 Authors read Author read Author's 189 - 21 reconcile read reconcile cancel that 232 - 3 Ditto - 16 Chrift. till read Chrift, till 235 — 15 projecutor 254 — 20 judingent 259 — 27 where read protector. read judgment 259 T 27 261 T 35 read were read venture read It precentical read mispangelical 277read perception 285 -40 287 - 36 - 27 leave out &c 298 - 33 read fo SKITTE read them 314 - 27

